

JULY 2010  
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I-85 CONNECTION

The Short Drive  
From Gwinnett To Turner Field  
Is A Big Hit

# ChopTalk

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE  
OF THE ATLANTA BRAVES

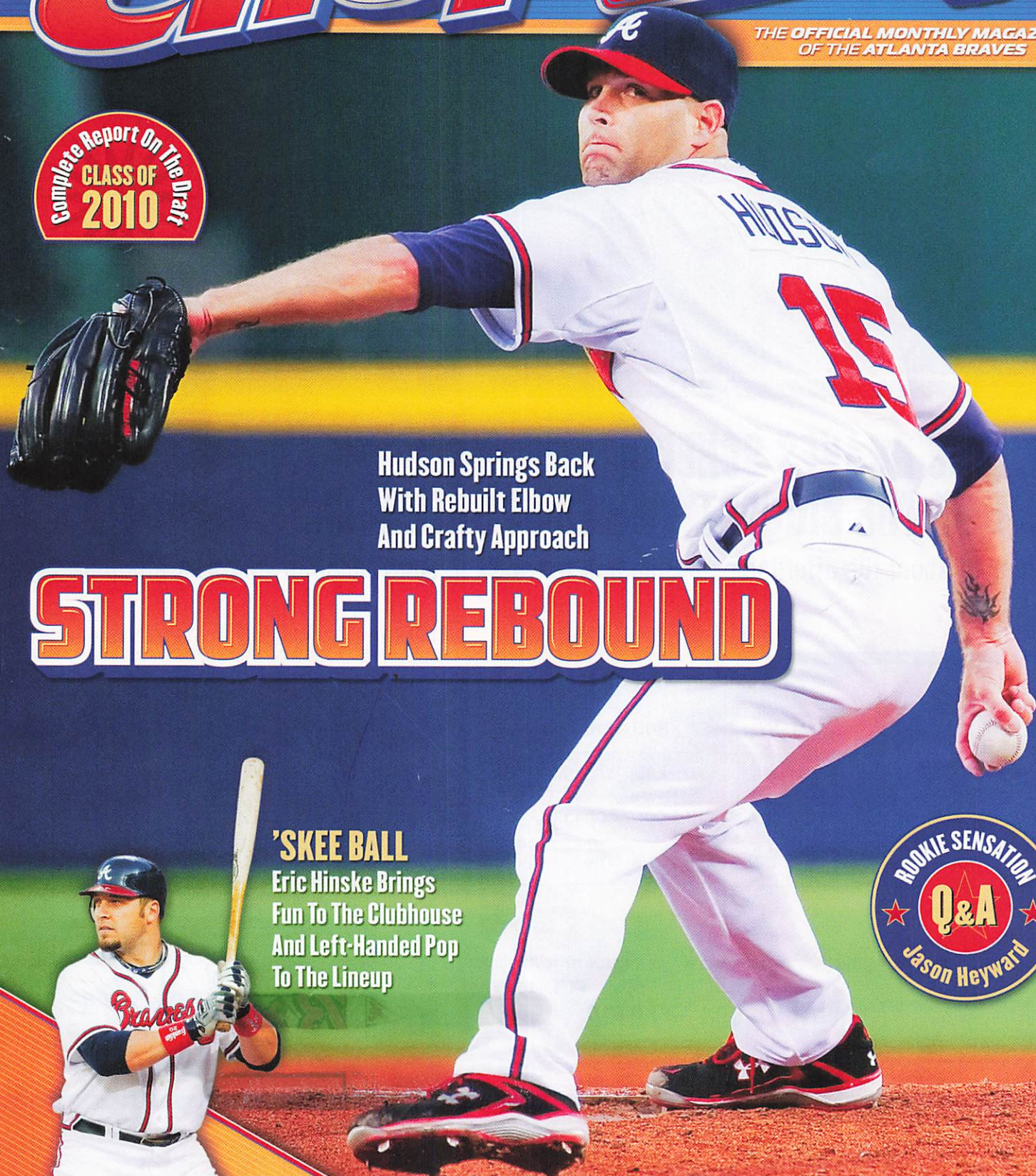
Complete Report On The Draft  
**CLASS OF  
2010**

Hudson Springs Back  
With Rebuilt Elbow  
And Crafty Approach

## STRONG REBOUND

'SKEE BALL

Eric Hinske Brings  
Fun To The Clubhouse  
And Left-Handed Pop  
To The Lineup







"Being a fan means having my back all season long."

# THIS IS BRAVES COUNTRY.

BRIAN MCCANN, #16



## THE 2010 BRAVES SCHEDULE FEATURES SOME OF THE BIGGEST GAMES IN BASEBALL

Learn more about the affordable, flexible and fun ways to enjoy them for your next group event.

### JULY

| S             | M                           | T            | W            | T             | F             | S             |
|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|               |                             |              |              | 1             | 2 FLA         | 3 FLA         |
|               |                             |              |              |               | 7:30          | 4:00          |
| 4 FSS<br>FLA  | 5 PTV<br>PHI                | 6 PTV<br>PHI | 7 PTV<br>PHI | 8             | 9 SS<br>NYM   | 10 FOX<br>NYM |
| 5:00          | 7:00                        | 7:00         | 7:00         |               | 7:00          | 4:00          |
| 11 FSS<br>NYM | 12 ALL-STAR GAME<br>ANAHEIM | 13           | 14           | 15 PTV<br>MIL | 16 PTV<br>MIL | 17 SS<br>MIL  |
| 1:00          |                             |              |              | 7:00          | 7:30          | 7:00          |
| 18 FSS<br>MIL | 19                          | 20 PTV<br>SD | 21 PTV<br>SD | 22 SS<br>SD   | 23 SS<br>FLA  | 24 SS<br>FLA  |
| 1:30          |                             | 7:00         | 7:00         | 1:00          | 7:00          | 7:00          |
| 25 FSS<br>FLA | 26                          | 27 SS<br>WAS | 28 SS<br>WAS | 29 SS<br>WAS  | 30 SS<br>CIN  | 31 SS<br>CIN  |
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### AUGUST

| S             | M             | T             | W            | T            | F             | S             |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 FSS<br>CIN  | 2 ESPN<br>NYM | 3 PTV<br>NYM  | 4 PTV<br>NYM | 5 PTV<br>SF  | 6 PTV<br>SF   | 7 FSS<br>SF   |
| 1:00          | 7:00          | 7:00          | 7:00         | 7:00         | 7:30          | 4:00          |
| 8 FSS<br>SF   | 9 SS<br>HOU   | 10 SS<br>HOU  | 11 SS<br>HOU | 12           | 13 PTV<br>LAD | 14 PTV<br>LAD |
| 1:30          | 8:00          | 8:00          | 2:00         |              | 7:30          | 7:00          |
| 15 FSS<br>LAD | 16 PTV<br>LAD | 17 SS<br>WAS  | 18 SS<br>WAS | 19 SS<br>WAS | 20 SS<br>CHI  | 21 FOX<br>CHI |
| 1:30          | 7:00          | 7:00          | 7:00         | 1:00         | 2:00          | 4:00          |
| 22 FSS<br>CHI | 23 SS<br>COL  | 24 SS<br>COL  | 25 SS<br>COL | 26           | 27 SS<br>FLA  | 28 FOX<br>FLA |
| 2:00          | 8:30          | 8:30          | 3:00         |              | 7:30          | 4:00          |
| 29 FSS<br>FLA | 30 PTV<br>NYM | 31 PTV<br>NYM |              |              |               |               |
| 1:30          | 7:00          | 7:00          |              |              |               |               |

### SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

| S             | M            | T            | W            | T            | F             | S             |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
|               |              |              | 1 PTV<br>NYM | 2 PTV<br>NYM | 3 SS<br>FLA   | 4 SS<br>FLA   |
|               |              |              | 7:00         | 7:00         | 7:00          | 7:00          |
| 5 FSS<br>FLA  | 6 SS<br>PIT  | 7 SS<br>PIT  | 8 SS<br>PIT  | 9 PTV<br>STL | 10 PTV<br>STL | 11 FOX<br>STL |
| 1:00          | 1:30         | 7:00         | 7:00         | 7:00         | 7:30          | 4:00          |
| 12 FSS<br>STL | 13 SS<br>WAS | 14 SS<br>WAS | 15 SS<br>WAS | 16           | 17 SS<br>NYM  | 18 FOX<br>NYM |
| 1:30          | 7:00         | 7:00         | 12:00        |              | 7:00          | 4:00          |
| 19 FSS<br>NYM | 20 SS<br>PHI | 21 SS<br>PHI | 22 SS<br>PHI | 23           | 24 SS<br>WAS  | 25 SS<br>WAS  |
| 1:00          | 7:00         | 7:00         | 7:00         |              | 7:00          | 1:00          |
| 26 FSS<br>WAS | 27 SS<br>FLA | 28 SS<br>FLA | 29 SS<br>FLA | 30           | 1 SS<br>PHI   | 2 SS<br>PHI   |
| 1:30          | 7:00         | 7:00         | 4:30         |              | 7:30          | 7:00          |
| 3 FSS<br>PHI  |              |              |              |              |               |               |
| 1:30          |              |              |              |              |               |               |

HOME GAMES AWAY GAMES  
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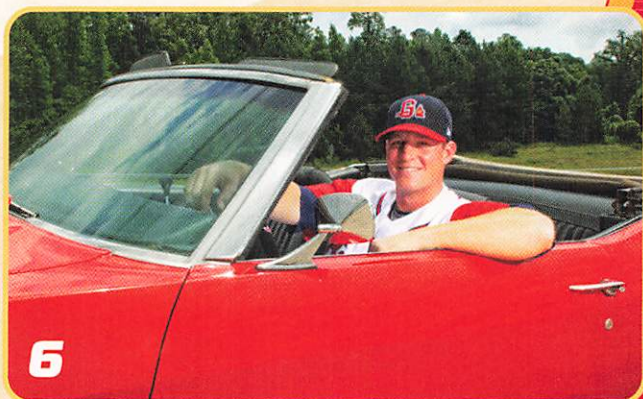
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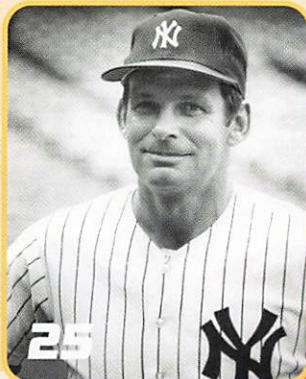
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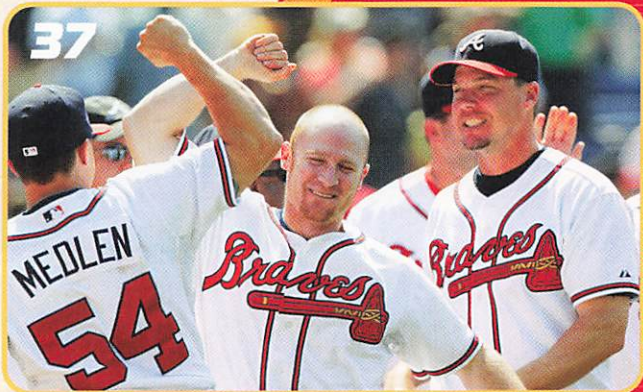
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Atlanta Braves

Design by Clark Odom





# BATTING ORDER

JULY 2010

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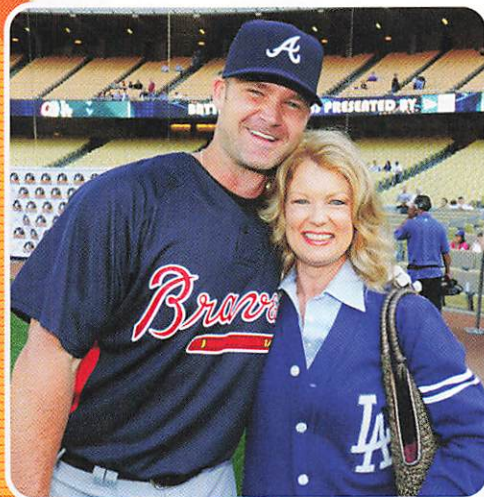
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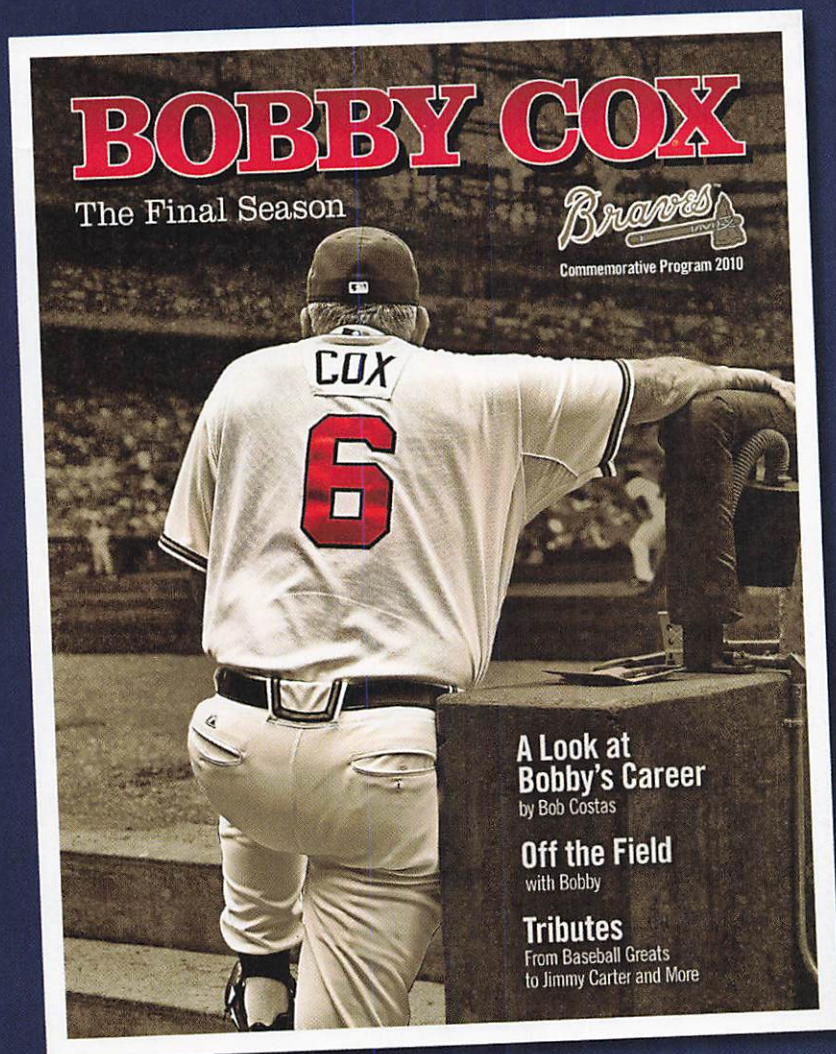
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POSTMASTER: Please send address changes and returns to: ChopTalk, P.O. Box 81247, Conyers, Ga. 30013-9247.



# BOBBY COX

## COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM



- 
- Feature article by Bob Costas
  - Bobby's life off the field
  - Tributes to Bobby from former and current players and coaches as well as Elton John, Tony LaRussa and President Jimmy Carter
- 

**Celebrate Bobby Cox's 25<sup>th</sup> and final season  
as the Braves' Skipper**

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Catcher Clint Sammons became the "poster boy" for the I-85 Connection last year when he made several trips back and forth between Turner Field and the Braves' top farm club in nearby Lawrenceville.



# I-85 CONNECTION

The Short 36-Mile Drive From Coolray Field To Turner Field Is A Big Hit

By Patty Rasmussen

Photos by Amanda Gardner

**G**winnett Braves first baseman Barbaro Canizares received an early wakeup call last July 31. He didn't complain, though, because it was G-Braves manager Dave Brundage calling to tell him to report to Turner Field instead of Gwinnett Stadium.

Atlanta general manager Frank Wren pulled the trigger on a trading deadline deal that day, sending first baseman Casey Kotchman to Boston for Adam LaRoche. However, LaRoche wasn't expected to make it to the ballpark in time for that night's game. Bobby Cox needed a first baseman, and the simple solution was to have Canizares drive 35 minutes south to Turner Field rather than his usual 10-minute drive to Gwinnett Stadium.

Canizares was in the Atlanta lineup that night, and when LaRoche reported the next day, Canizares was back with the Braves' top farm club.

What in the past had often been a logistical headache involving finding last-minute flights from Richmond, Virginia, or other cities in the International League, was made immeasurably easier by the decision made three years ago to relocate the Braves' Triple-A team to the metro Atlanta area, a mere 36 miles north of Turner Field, along I-85.

"It's a dream," said Bill Acree, long-time director of team travel and equipment manager for the Braves. "We got (shortstop) Brandon Hicks (for injured Yunel Escobar) the day we left to go on a road trip to Washington, Philly and Milwaukee (May 2). He drove from Gwinnett, parked in the player lot, and left with us after the game. That's ideal."

"Operationally, moving to Gwinnett made a ton of sense," said Mike Plant, the Braves' executive vice president of business operations, including operations of minor league clubs. "We researched clubs who had minor league teams in close proximity (to their parent clubs). We felt with enough cooperation - we owned the club, they were our employees, we work together and create some cross and joint promotional programs - the positives would outweigh the negatives. And they have."

It's certainly been easier on the players and their families. Just ask utility infielder Brooks Conrad. Married and a father of two small children, Conrad signed with the Braves as a minor league free agent in November 2008.

"That was one of the biggest reasons why we were so excited about signing here, because the Triple-A and major league clubs were right here," he said. "It wouldn't be the deciding factor. You have to look at all things, like your oppor-

tunity to make the big league team, but you have to look at everything."

Last season, Conrad, his wife, Jesse, and their children, son Jax (now 4) and daughter Reese (1), lived in the apartment complex directly behind Gwinnett Stadium (now



Players like Sammons know the "big club" is only a few minutes away - pending traffic!

Coolray Field). There's even an entrance that allows players to literally walk to the ballpark if they choose to.

They were neighbors with Brundage and several other players who lived in the apartments. It was a good decision at the time. Conrad spent most of the season at Gwinnett, though he was called up briefly, from July 3-20, and again on Sept. 1. But even when he was playing at Turner Field, the drive took less than an hour, and he could sleep in his own bed.

This year, even before Conrad made the team out of spring training, they opted to rent a house in the nearby city of Sandy

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Turner Field  
19 miles



Coolray Field  
17 miles

Springs, approximately 35 miles from Gwinnett and almost the same driving distance to Turner Field.

"We actually got our house for about as much as we could have gotten an apartment," he said. "It has three bedrooms and creaky hardwood floors, but it's got a great yard with lots of trees and room for our kids to play."

Conrad has remained with the major league club since the start of the season, but if he had been sent down to Triple A, the drive to the ballpark would have been approximately the same.

"A lot of places, you have to get on a plane, break a lease, and pay fees," he said, recounting a saga from his Triple-A playing days in the Houston organization.

He was sent down to Double-A without knowing how long he'd be there.

"We broke our lease, Jesse quit her job," he said. "And it ended up being only three weeks. It's great to be somewhere close, so there's none of that. [In Atlanta] We live in the same place whether I'm up or down."

What fans may not realize is that minor leaguers are on a set pay scale until their sixth season in the minor leagues when they become free agents. At that point they're able to negotiate their own contracts, but even then, most minor league free agents rarely get more than \$60,000 a year.

"In my first three years at Triple-A, you're on that pay scale, and after taxes you're only clearing \$13,000 to \$14,000 a year," said Conrad, who often worked several jobs during the off-season to help pay bills. The cost of maintaining an off-season home and an apartment during the season is borne by the players, something they're willing to do in order to have the opportunity to play ball.

Clint Sammons (above) has been the poster boy of the I-85 Callup Corridor. Although he made his first major league appearance with Atlanta in 2007, playing in a game in New York versus the Mets and starting against the Astros in Houston, he had his first significant callup in July 2008, after Brian McCann was knocked out of the lineup following a collision at the plate with the Phillies' Shane Victorino.

"We were actually at home in Richmond, but the Braves were in Philadelphia," said Sammons. "I found out about 7 o'clock that night, so I had to fly to Atlanta early the next day, because the Braves were about to start a homestand."

Sammons' wife, Meredith, was in Richmond and instead of

flying back to Atlanta, where they live, drove her husband's car back home.

But it was during last season that Sammons realized the full benefit of the proximity of the Braves' major league club and its top farm team.

Starting the season with the major league club, Sammons was sent to Triple-A on April 16. He was recalled on May 1 and sent down again just eight days later. Sammons remained in Gwinnett until Sept. 1 when he was recalled to the big club.

"We're just lucky we live in Atlanta," he said. "I never have to leave my home. I sleep in my own bed, no matter which team I'm playing with. I don't have to worry about getting on an airplane at 4 a.m. to try to make a day game the next day. It's a lot better."

Gwinnett Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman said having the big league team in the same city provides him with an emotional boost, in no small part because of his roommate, Atlanta rightfielder Jason Heyward.

"It's a huge motivation for me to have Turner Field and the big league team right there, especially living with Jason," said Freeman. "He goes out the driveway one way, I go the other way."

Due to the baseball schedules, the roomies rarely see each other, but Freeman said they talk by phone almost every day. Though Freeman suffered a right knee strain in late May (an MRI showed no structural damage), he continued to use the

proximity of the major league club as inspiration.

"I'm working hard to get back and continue my goal of getting to the big leagues," he said. "It's nice having the big league club there, because it makes you work harder. Sometimes I come home and talk to Jason, and we talk about the team. It makes me want to be there even more."

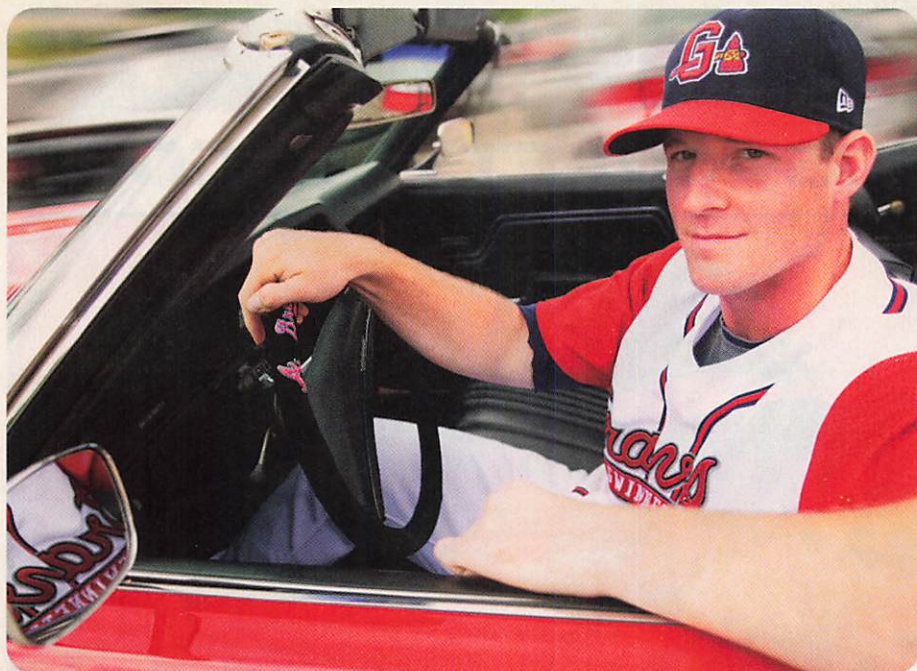
Brundage said riding past Turner Field while heading to or from the Atlanta airport reminds the players, "That's what we're striving for."

"They get to see the big picture," said Brundage. "Living close to Atlanta means they're always hearing about what the major league team is doing. They can watch the games on TV. They even see the Turner Field traffic. There aren't too many secrets. They probably know what's going on before I do!"

Fans also are enjoying the closeness of the two teams.







"We get asked, 'Aren't the Atlanta Braves concerned about you siphoning off their Gwinnett county traffic,' " said Gwinnett Braves general manager North Johnson. "The truth is, people can have the big league experience, and if they want a minor league experience, which is at least a 90-degree difference from the major league experience, they can come right here. The beauty of Triple-A is that it's a fairly high level of play. Many of the players on our team or on the visiting teams could be major league players on other teams."

The Gwinnett Braves experience a bump in attendance when major leaguers, either on the Braves or on visiting teams, are there for rehab assignments. In 2009, Brian McCann made a rehab start at Gwinnett, resulting in a packed house. But what McCann liked best was he didn't have to go far to get there or get home.

"I live about 10 minutes away, if that," said McCann. "I slept in my own bed. I can't imagine why a big league club wouldn't want their Triple-A team that close. The facilities there are big league, from the batting cages underneath to the locker rooms."

Johnson likened the teams' relationship to a "big brother, little brother" situation.

"They own us and want us to succeed," said Johnson. "They're very accommodating to the things we're trying to do."

After an afternoon game at Turner Field in May, fans were urged to take their tickets to Coolray Field for half off the admission to that evening's game, and other cross promotions are in the works for later in the season.

Relief pitcher Craig Kimbrel got his first callup to Atlanta in early May when Jair Jurrjens went on the disabled list. He was with the major league team for two weeks before heading back to Triple-A. A little more than a week later, Kimbrel got the call to join Atlanta on the road when Takashi Saito went on the disabled list June 4.

In fact, Kimbrel was searching for a new apartment the day he got the second callup. He and fellow Gwinnett reliever Cory Gearrin share an apartment in Norcross, but Kimbrel was ready to find something more proximate to both Turner Field and the Gwinnett ballpark.

"I looked in Buckhead," he said. "It's about 15 minutes to Turner Field and 30 minutes to Coolray. That way I can live in the same place and not have to deal with the hassle of driving or traffic when I'm called up or down."

When Kimbrel returned from his first stint in the majors, he was able to tell his Gwinnett teammates about the experience.

"They joked around with me, 'Oh you're a big league guy now! What are you doing hanging out with us?'" he said.

And they ragged him even harder when they learned he returned to Gwinnett with closer Billy Wagner's phone number saved in his phone.

"Yeah, they said, 'You're a big shot. You've got Billy Wagner's number in your phone now.' It's all fun and games," added Kimbrel. "But in the end, everyone wants to be in Atlanta."

And now, they are.



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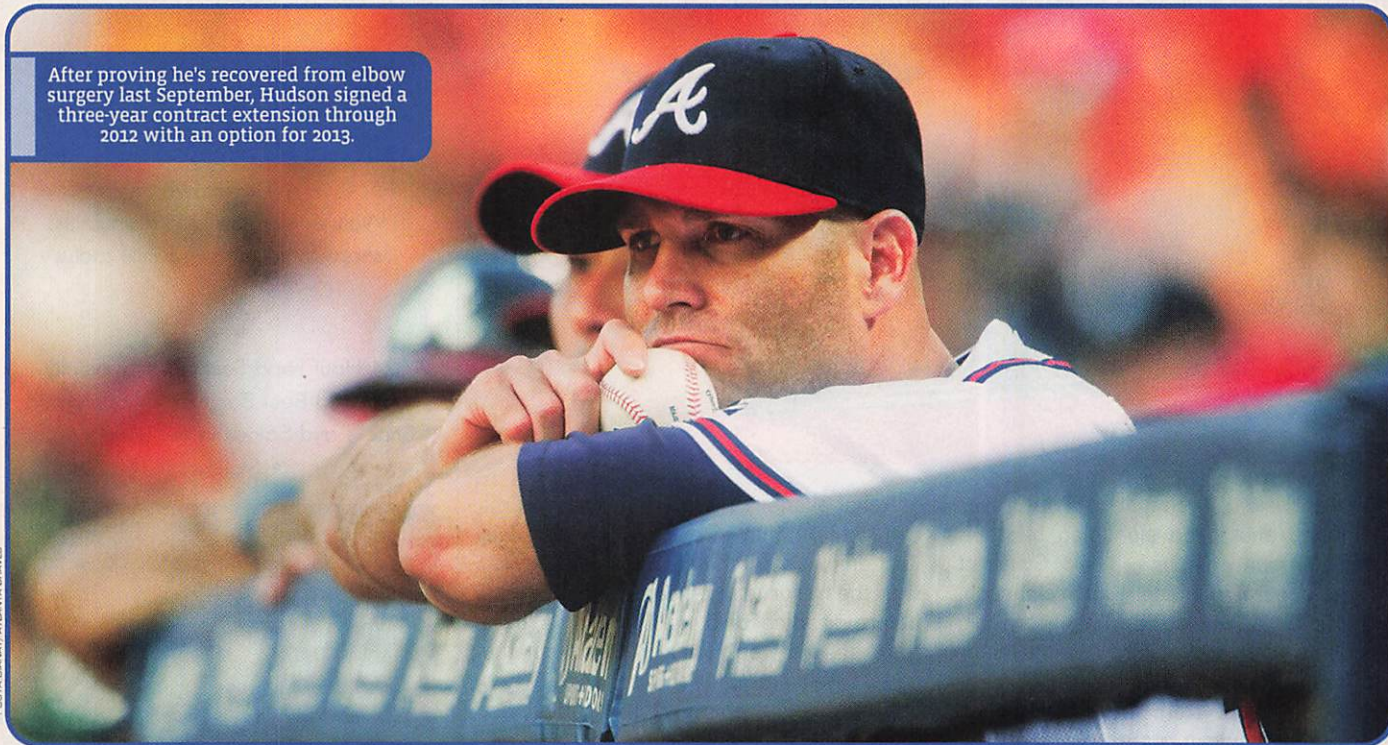
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## HUDSON FINDS "CRAFTY" IS GOOD

After proving he's recovered from elbow surgery last September, Hudson signed a three-year contract extension through 2012 with an option for 2013.



**IT WAS NEARLY MIDNIGHT** in the Braves' clubhouse, and there were weary smiles all around. Atlanta had just taken the second of what would be a three-game sweep of the Phillies and held an ever-firmer grasp on first place in the East.

At his locker, Billy Wagner was shaking his head in relief and near-disbelief. Just minutes earlier, he'd induced a weak, bases-loaded groundout from Ryan Howard to close the game.

Across the clubhouse, Troy Glaus was marveling at his suddenly explosive bat... Brian McCann, drenched in sweat, was shaking off stars from a home-plate collision.

Watching it all was the guy who's having perhaps the best season of any Brave, the guy who'd just thrown six solid innings, with a rain delay sprinkled in, against the two-time defending National League champions. Dressed in jeans, sandals and a Braves-blue Under Armour golf shirt, Tim Hudson looked perfectly content, both with himself and his team.

"It's been a good few weeks," Hudson said. "It hasn't been a walk in the park for every game, but every game I've been able to pitch around some trouble. There are a few games

where I've had to battle but not break. But there have been a lot where I go out there and feel really good. Those are the days when it's a lot of fun to take the mound."

It wasn't so long ago that Hudson was almost an afterthought, an "Oh yeah, we've got him on our roster" pitcher. Losing major chunks of two seasons to injury will do that. In August 2008, Hudson under-

"I bounced back pretty good from surgery and rehab," Hudson agreed. "I'm real happy with how I feel. As a result, I'm comfortable out there."

Comfortable enough to have a 6-1 record through June 1. Comfortable enough to serve as the centerpiece of a rotation that brings back fond memories of the '90s.

Although it seems like he just got here,

AS I'VE GOTTEN OLDER,  
I'VE TRIED NOT TO MISS SO MANY BATS AS MUCH.

went Tommy John surgery on his right elbow, a procedure that took him out of the rotation for a year. After too many months spent watching the Braves from the best seat in Turner Field, Hudson finally returned to the mound for some spot work last September.

"We had him back for a month and a half last year, and we liked what we saw then," Bobby Cox said. "We saw he had a good base to be the old Hudson [in 2010], and he turned out to be just that."

probably because all Atlanta pitchers throw in the long shadow of Smoltz/Glavine/Maddux, Hudson is actually in his sixth season as a Brave. Over the last decade, he's been one of the game's most dominant pitchers, ranking in the top 10 in innings and ERA, and piling up wins by the truckload. Let's climb the ladder with some stats, as of June 1:

\* Over the last 11 years, his 143 wins place him fourth among active pitchers.

\* He ranks 10th in career winning per-



With six wins and a 2.44 ERA through early June, Hudson once again is looking like a true ace.

centage among pitchers with at least 200 decisions, and second among active pitchers, by mere percentage points, to Roy Halladay.

\* He's never posted a losing season in his professional career. Ever. Beginning in 1997 at Southern Oregon.

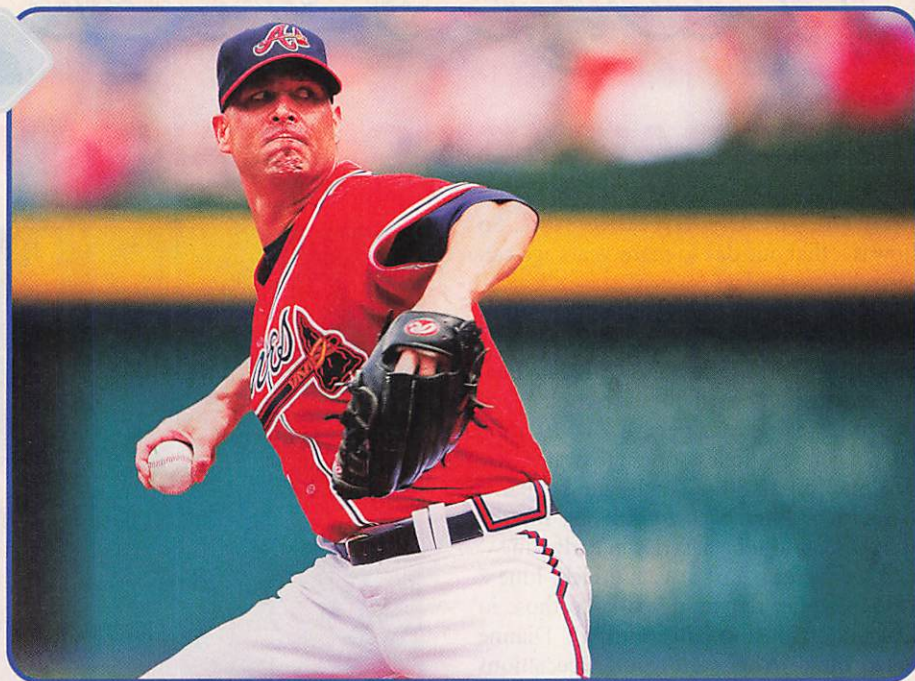
Thing is, Hudson doesn't blow away batters. His strikeout-to-walk ratio is almost 1:1. Fireballers are usually more in the 4:1 range. He works fast and keeps his fielders active, an approach that's by design.

"As I've gotten older, I've tried not to miss so many bats as much," he smiled. "I spent a lot of my career doing whatever I could to get guys out. Now, I try not to go so deep into the count. I've got these guys behind me. I might as well put them to work."

We all grow older. We all grow wiser. We learn that what works for us when we're younger doesn't always hold up in our later years. Hudson, who has a fading flame tattoo on the inside of his left arm and photos of his kids at Disney World in his locker, has now adopted the crafty-old-guy approach to pitching.

"I don't want the guys to see so many pitches early," he said. "Once I find the [strike] zone, I can do what I want. So, I'll mix it up, do whatever I can to keep guys behind in the count. If I can keep them to three pitches or less, that's a good thing."

As a result of his head-and-arm combo, Hudson has established himself as a worthy heir to the Braves' tradition of Cooperstown-worthy pitchers.



POUYA DANAT/ATLANTA BRAVES

IF I CAN BE A GOOD TEAMMATE,  
IF I CAN HELP SOME OF THESE YOUNG GUYS ALONG,  
THAT'S WHAT I'M LOOKING TO DO

"He's a true No. 1," said McCann, who's already caught many of the Braves' best. "He's such a competitor. Every day you know you're getting his best. He's a great player, a great teammate, a great person."

Hudson laughed off any comparison to the Braves' pitching pantheon.

"I'm not in those guys' class," he said. "I'm just trying to go out there and give us a chance to win every time I'm up."

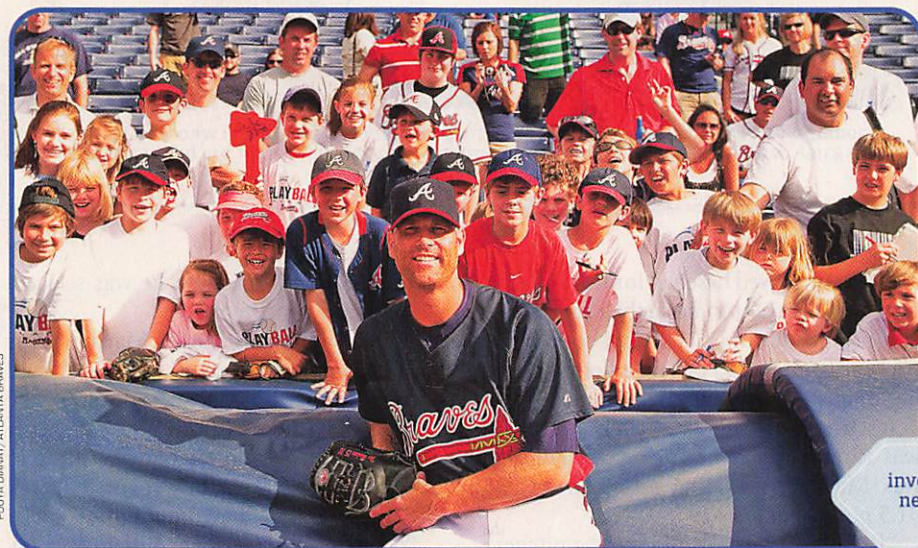
Okay, so if he won't put himself in the

top-pitchers conversation, we will. Hudson, along with Steve Avery, stands at the top of the second tier of Cox-era Braves pitchers. He turns 35 years old this month, and he'll be a Brave for at least two more seasons beyond this one – which, thanks to Hudson's efforts on and off the field, could well end with the Braves playing in October again.

"If I can be a good teammate, if I can help some of these young guys along, that's what I'm looking to do," he said. "Things like the post-season will take care of themselves. We're doing all the right things right now."

Back to the clubhouse. As fine as Hudson's evening was, it was about to get even better. His interviews wrapped, his day done, Hudson ducked out the back door of the clubhouse to find his kids still awake and eagerly waiting for him, mini-uniforms and all. Their gleeful "Daddy!" squeals echoed down the Turner Field tunnel, and Hudson grinned as he crouched to receive hugs that were closer to tackles.

Good days, indeed.



POUYA DANAT/ATLANTA BRAVES

A champion for many causes, especially those involving children, Hudson has been the Braves' nominee for the Roberto Clemente Award for community involvement the last four years.



# A Wife's Pitch

BY CAROLYN LOWE



## BASEBALL'S LONG AND WINDING ROAD

**NINETEEN YEARS IS A LONG TIME.** So how is it that one day so many years ago can seem like yesterday?

That's exactly how Derek's mom, Dianne, described a day back in the Summer of 1991. She was in Arizona then, accompanying Derek to start rookie ball with the Seattle Mariners. Now, 19 years later, Dianne's tireless quest to watch her son pitch in all 30 major league ballparks has brought her back to Arizona for the Braves/Diamondback series in early June.

After Derek's start at Chase Field June 7 (dropping her remaining parks to those in Oakland, Houston and Tampa), Dianne asked him, "What were your expectations when we were sitting on that plane going from Michigan to Arizona all those years ago?"

In June of '91, Derek was a tall, skinny, 18-year-old kid who was waiting to graduate high school. A five-sport athlete at Edsel Ford High in Dearborn, Michigan, Derek had only *one* win as a pitcher his senior year. Basketball was his first love, and he had accepted a full scholarship to play at Eastern Michigan University.

When Derek closed his eyes, he dreamed of a future in the NBA, not MLB.

So, imagine Dianne's surprise when the phone rang one afternoon and it was the Seattle Mariners, saying they'd just selected Derek in the eighth round of the amateur draft.

"Derek wasn't even home," Dianne said. "He was at a friend's house playing basketball."

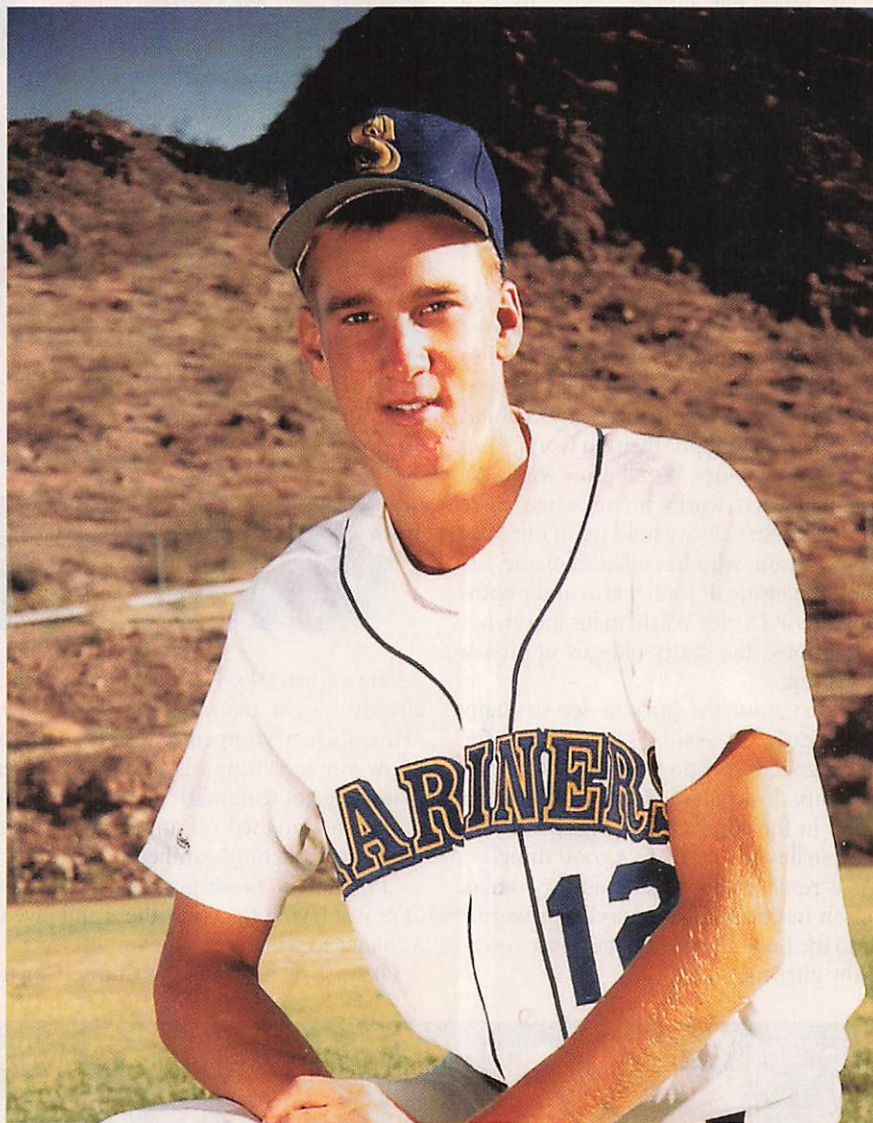
Because no one had cell phones in those dark ages, Derek didn't find out his future was about to change until several hours later.

As we sat in the lounge at the Ritz-Carlton Phoenix with Derek's mom and her husband, Doug Gravel, I could tell Derek was thinking back to that time 19 years ago as he pondered an answer to his mom's question. The first round of this year's draft had just been televised on ESPN.

"I didn't have any expectations," Derek replied. "Unless failure counts."

That answer took me by surprise! How could he expect to fail? I guess I just assumed every kid drafted at least expected to make it?

Worse still, Dianne admits she didn't



Standing 6-foot-6 and barely weighing 170 pounds, 18-year-old Derek Lowe - who won just a single game as a high school senior pitcher - reported to Arizona for his first pro ball assignment with Seattle's rookie league team.

think he'd make it either!

"He only played baseball for fun," Dianne told me. "He went to basketball camps and clinics every summer. We had a hoop in the backyard and had to put up a flood light so he could shoot baskets after dark."

It's true. For 6-foot-6 Derek, basketball was King. He was first team all-state and was Michigan's leading scorer, averaging 31.5 points per game.

"I didn't even make all-city as a pitcher,"

Derek said, laughing.

Adding insult to injury, he was selected all-city... as a *shortstop*!

Derek signed with the Mariners for \$35,000 plus four years of college, should he ever decide to go. To hear him tell the story now, it's pretty funny.

"It was just me and my parents sitting in our kitchen with the scout," Derek explained. "I didn't have an agent."

"When they made their initial offer, my



dad (Donnie) said we should hold out for \$45,000, but I was too afraid they would walk away, so we took it."

Turns out the Mariners' budget for that round was \$85,000.

Either way, Derek's 18-year-old expectations had been changed. Basketball could wait - he would defer his scholarship for three years - and instead of driving 25 miles to Eastern Michigan's campus in Ypsilanti, he and his mom boarded a plane and flew 2,500 miles to Mariners' rookie ball in Tempe, Arizona. It was the first time Derek had ever been on an airplane.

"I was embarrassed to go," Derek admitted now. "I only threw 82-83 mph. I had an ERA over 6.50 and couldn't get out players from Dearborn High! And now I'm going up against the best prospects in baseball?"

"It was a joke! I thought for sure I'd be back at Eastern playing basketball in two or three years."

As we continued to reminisce about Derek's draft days, the TVs around us tuned to ESPN rolled video of this year's number-one overall draft pick, Bryce Harper, who was taken by the Nationals. He's 17 years old and skipped his final two years of high school and got his GED so he could play at a junior college and be eligible for this year's draft.

In an article back in June of 2009, Sports



This June, Derek Lowe's mother, Dianne, caught up with him in Arizona to continue her quest to see him pitch in all 30 major league cities, leaving her just three shy of her goal.

Illustrated proclaimed him the LeBron James of baseball.

Harper said of himself in the same article that his expectations were, "To be considered the greatest player who ever lived."

That got me thinking. Who was the number-one overall pick in Derek's draft in 1991? Turns out it was a pitcher taken out of high school in North Carolina named Brien Taylor. Ever heard of him? Me either.

His senior year, he threw 88 innings, had 213 strikeouts, and reached 98-99 mph on the radar gun. The New York Yankees signed him to a \$1.55 million dollar deal and thought he would be pitching for their big league club by age 19. You know what he's best known for? Being only the second amateur player to be picked first overall and never reach the major leagues.

The next day, with this idea of "expectations" still on my mind, Dianne, Doug and I found a sports bar where we could watch Steven Strasburg's much-anticipated big league debut for Washington. I couldn't imagine any player would be able to live up to the expectations heaped on this guy!

However, last year's number-one overall draft pick proved me wrong. He did every-

thing but set the sun!

As a baseball fan, it was exciting to see the normally sparsely populated Nationals Park sold out with fans cheering every two-strike count. It's great for the Nationals, and also great for baseball. And I imagine Bryce Harper will one day be more like his Nationals teammate, Strasburg, or the Braves' Jason Heyward, than like Brien Taylor.

But expectations aren't actions. Hope isn't reality. Who knows where Strasburg will be in 2023. Will he still be pitching? What about Bryce Harper? Will he be the "greatest player who ever lived?"

Will we be saying, "We're so lucky to be watching these future Hall of Famers!"

Or will we be asking, "Whatever happened to those guys?"

This is Derek's 13th year in the major leagues. He is one win shy of 150. Maybe being selected with the 214th overall pick isn't such a bad way to go after all.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Carolyn Lowe, the wife of Derek Lowe, is contributing a monthly column to ChopTalk throughout the season.



In June 1991, the Braves were getting ready to go Worst to First, and Derek Lowe's mother, Dianne, was herding him from Michigan to Arizona to start his career.



## WELCOME WAGON

**A NEAR-CONSTANT STREAM** of pre-game visitors greeted Bobby Cox when he made his last managerial visit (regular season, at least!) to historic Dodger Stadium June 3-6. Perhaps the most special to Cox, quite a dog lover, was "Denny" of Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). Former Dodgers reliever Joe Moeller (1962, '64, '66-71), who serves CCI as a volunteer, introduced Cox to Denny, and the two bonded immediately.

CCI is a nationwide organization that breeds, trains and provides service dogs, skilled companions, hearing dogs and facility dogs for people with disabilities other than blindness. Many of their dogs become companions for military service members that suffer permanent physical injuries. Cox is one of many major leaguers to offer support to the organization. Others include broadcaster Don Sutton and Marlins manager Fredi Gonzalez. Visit [cci.org](http://cci.org) for more information.

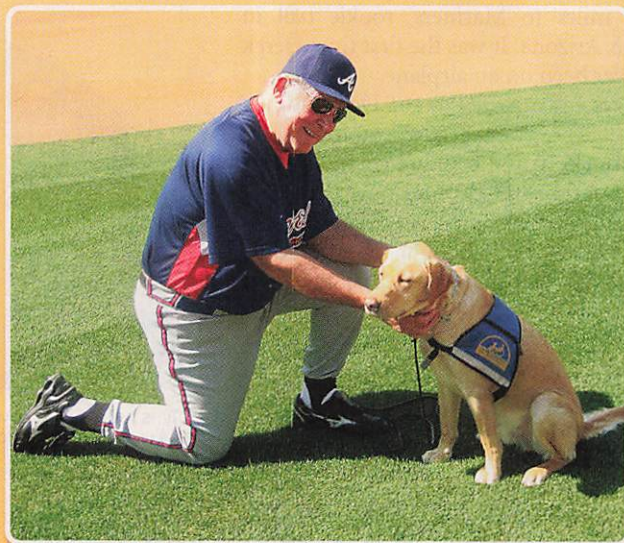
Cox's other visitors ranged from former outfielder Brian Asselstine, who played for him in 1978-81, during which he suffered essentially a career-ending ankle injury at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, to Mickey Hartling, a former minor league teammate. Asselstine, who lives in Santa Ynez, Calif., brought his son (Wyatt) and a group of his teen baseball teammates, and Hartling, who lives in Newport Beach, brought his golf buddies, who presented Cox with some cigars.

Then, none other than Dodgers manager (and former Braves player and manager) Joe Torre strolled across the

field and sat next to Cox in the dugout. The two exchanged pleasantries for several minutes, during which they discussed retirement (Torre, 10 months older than Cox is in the final year of his contract but hasn't decided if he'll continue to manage) and Cox introduced Torre to Jason Heyward.

"Your uncle played for John Wooden at UCLA, didn't he?" asked Torre.

Heyward responded that he did, and then Torre said, "Stay healthy - just don't hurt me!"



Dog lover Bobby Cox meets "Denny" of Canine Companions for Independence prior to a game at Dodger Stadium in early June.

## NO-HITTER

**TODD REDMOND** (R) knows what a roller coaster ride the baseball season is. The Gwinnett Braves righthander, mired in a slump, regained his groove in a big way by pitching the first no-hitter of his career, a 4-0 triumph at Louisville on May 28.

Redmond, 25 years old, entered the game having lost three of his four previous starts, during which he allowed 19 earned runs and 21 hits in 17 innings. Against the Bats, however, he had a perfect game until issuing his only two walks of the game in the sixth inning. He wound up picking off one of those baserunners, and finished the game facing 28 batters, just one over the minimum. Redmond, acquired from Pittsburgh in 2008 for



Tyler Yates, struck out three and had nearly twice as many flyouts (15) as groundouts (8).

The no-hitter was the first for the Braves at the Triple-A level since Pete Smith accomplished the feat for Richmond against Rochester, a 1-0 win in seven innings, on May 3, 1992.

The last Braves' Triple-A no-hitter in a nine-inning game was a combined effort by Charlie Puelo and Steve Ziem against Oklahoma City, on June 27, 1989. The last nine-inning no-hitter by a single Brave in the International League was June 1, 1977, when Mickey Mahler dominated Toledo, 7-0.

- BILL BALLEW





ALISON SHARP/GETTY

## GETTING TO KNOW DAVID ROSS

### PICTURE YOU CARRY:

Daughter in her car seat.

### FAVE SNACK FOOD:

M&Ms peanut.

### FAVE HOME COOKED MEAL:

Pot roast.

### FAVE VEGGIE:

Broccoli.

### ONE THING YOU'D WANT IF STRANDED ON A DESERT ISLAND:

Ranch dressing (It goes good with anything - bugs, banana leaf...).

### FAVE GADGET:

iPod.

### FAVE TV SHOW:

American Idol.

### MOST ADMIRED FORMER PLAYER:

Hank Aaron.

### MOST UNDERRATED PLAYER:

Matt Diaz.

### PITCHER YOU LEAST LIKE TO FACE:

Mariano Rivera.

### FAVE ALL-TIME MOVIE:

Gladiator.

### FAVE MUSICAL ARTIST:

Rascal Flatts.

### LAST MOVIE YOU SAW:

The Princess and the Frog.

### FAVE PLAYER GROWING UP:

Pudge Rodriguez.

### FAVE TEAM GROWING UP:

Braves.

HOW DO  
THEY DO  
THAT?

## SCOUT AN OPPONENT

**THE BRAVES** play more than 50 series in a season. Before each one begins, they thoroughly analyze the opposing team to maximize their chances for success.

Advance scout Bobby Wine starts the process. He scouts three games of an opponent just before they face the Braves. Depending on the schedule, Wine may see that club additional times in the weeks leading up to the matchup. He puts together information on the team's tendencies, where balls get hit by their batters, the way they were pitched, and the way they should be pitched.

Wine then emails his scouting report to Alan Butts (below, R), the Braves baseball systems operator and bullpen catcher. "You look for holes in their swings and where their strengths are," said Butts. "You try to attack their weak spots that you might be able to expose in a series."

Video coordinator Rob Smith (below, L) also plays a key role. He provides hitting, fielding, and pitching charts, statistics, and video of the opponent. It includes a spray chart of where the opposing batters have hit the ball.

"So I'll look at the Major League spray chart of where these guys have hit the ball over their last 500 at-bats," said Butts. "And then I compare them to how they've done against us. Then we try to set our alignment to that."

Butts summarizes all the key information on cheat sheets for the coaching staff. He passes them out at the Braves coaches' meeting with Bobby Cox, held before the first game of each series. Pitching coach Roger McDowell and bullpen coach Eddie Perez watch video beforehand, and make their own notes. Based on the scouting report and everybody's collaborative input, they decide how to pitch and defense the opposing team. If changes get made during the meeting, they all update their cheat sheet.

"When we go into that meeting, the best thing that can happen is what Eddie and Roger see, and what Bobby Wine and I have put down on paper, all comes together," said Butts. "If everybody sees those same holes and there are four different sets of eyes looking at them, it makes it a lot easier."

About an hour and a half later, the coaches meet with the players to share the information. That puts the entire team on the same page, fully prepared for the series.

- STEVE FALL



PATRICK J. JAMES/GETTY



## CALENDAR BOYS

**THE BRAVES** were 20-8 (.714) in May to move into first place in the NL East, and they also dominated awards for the month. **Troy Glaus** was named the NL Player of the Month, **Jason Heyward** was named NL Rookie of the Month for the second straight time, and **Brooks Conrad** received Major League Baseball's Clutch Performer of the Month.

In 28 May games, Glaus led the NL with 28 RBIs while hitting .330 (34-for-103), with six home runs, 17 runs and a .534 slugging percentage. His May performance raised his season batting average from .194 to .274. Sidelined for most of last season with a shoulder injury, the 33-year-old veteran had nine multi-RBI performances during the month.

On May 1, Glaus went 3-for-5 with a season-high four RBIs in a 10-1 win over Houston. The 2002 World Series MVP finished the month riding a six-game hitting streak. His three-run homer on May 31 helped the Braves defeat Philadelphia 9-3.

Heyward became the first rookie since **Geovany Soto** of the Cubs in 2008 to win the award twice in a sea-



After a slow April, Troy Glaus has become one of the top power hitters in the National League, as well as the big right-handed bat in the middle of the order that the Braves needed.

son, and the first since Milwaukee's **Ryan Braun** in 2007 to win the award in consecutive months.

He led all major league rookies with three triples, 19 RBIs, 19 runs scored and three stolen bases during May. In addition, he tied for first with four home runs and 16 walks while pacing NL rookies with a .337 batting average. The 20-year-old also added seven doubles, a .628 slugging percentage and a .453 on-base percentage, which ranked second in the league.

During the first three games of the month, Heyward went 6-for-8 with a double, two home runs, five RBIs and four runs scored. On May 19 against Cincinnati, he tied a career-best with three hits, including two doubles, a triple and two runs scored. His second double of the night came with two outs in the ninth inning of a 4-4 game, and drove home the winning run, his second walk-off hit of the season. Heyward compiled 10 multi-hit games along with five multi-RBI performances in May.

Glaus and Heyward both will receive specially designed trophies to commemorate their awards. For more on Conrad and his award, see page 37.

## COLLISION COURSE

**Nate McLouth** and **Jason Heyward** collided while chasing a flyball hit directly between them June 9 at Arizona, and McLouth wound up going on the disabled list because of it. Not only that, but the ball was not caught, allowing the Diamondbacks **Gerardo Parra** to circle the bases for a game-winning inside-the-park home run in the eighth inning. That "home run" ended **Peter Moylan's** string of 123 homerless appearances covering 102 innings dating to Mar. 30, 2008. McLouth had concussion-like symptoms. The Braves originally planned to call up **Jordan Schafer** to replace him, but when **Omar Infante** fouled a ball off his foot June 11 and had to miss a few games, they decided they needed an infielder instead, and summoned slick-fielding **Brandon Hicks**.

## STREAKING

The Braves won nine straight games May

26-June 3 before having the streak snapped June 4 with a 5-4 loss to the Dodgers in Los Angeles. **Kenshin Kawakami** was charged with the loss, becoming the first Braves pitcher to start a season 0-8 since **Rosy Ryan** of the 1926 Boston Braves. **Jason Heyward** struck out five times in the game to equal a major league record for most strikeouts in a nine-inning game. Among others, **Andruw Jones** also did it in 2007. The winning streak was the Braves' longest since a 15-game streak in early 2000.

## EFFICIENCY EXPERT

Sensational rookie reliever **Jonny Venters** picked up his first career save in an unusual way June 3 in Los Angeles, when he came in to throw one pitch after **Takashi Saito** strained his left hamstring. Saito was in position to pick up the save because **Billy Wagner** had the night off. With two outs and none on base, Saito had an 0-2 count on

Dodgers catcher **Russell Martin** but could not continue. Venters was called in from the bullpen, and Martin swung and missed at his first - and only - pitch, ending the game with a 4-3 Atlanta victory. Saito had to be placed on the disabled list, and **Craig Kimbrel** was called up from Gwinnett to replace him.

## STRONG COMEBACK

**Brooks Conrad's** walk-off pinch-hit grand slam May 20 against Cincinnati at Turner Field completed the largest comeback in franchise history. It was only the 23rd time in history that a walk-off grand slam overcame a three-run deficit and only the second time it was done by a pinch-hitter. The only other Brave to hit a walk-off slam was Braves Hall of Fame catcher **Del Crandall** on Sept. 11, 1955. The Braves trailed 9-3 before scoring seven in the ninth to beat the Reds, 10-9. Conrad became the seventh different Brave to hit a game-winner in eight final at-bat vic-



tories this season, and the third in the past three games. It also was the Braves' second grand slam of the season (**Martin Prado**, May 10) after not hitting any in 2009.

## SHORT HOPS

- A** **Martin Prado** was named NL Player of the Week May 10-16 after hitting .367 with 11 RBIs over a six-game span.
- A** **Chipper Jones** hit his third home run of the season May 31 to help beat the Phillies, 9-3. It was his first homer since April 16 and helped the Braves move into first place. It was the first time they were in first that late in the season since May 15, 2007.
- A** According to the Elias Sports Bureau, on June 12 at Minnesota, **Brooks Conrad** became the third major leaguer this year to successfully execute a suicide squeeze bunt to drive in the winning run in the ninth inning or later.
- A** **Brian McCann** missed four starts in late May with a strained right quad.
- A** **Matt Diaz** had successful hand surgery May 19 to remove the remnants of a splinter from a badly infected right thumb.
- A** **Jair Jurrjens** made his first rehab start June 14 at Gwinnett, working 2 2/3 innings and allowing two runs on five hits with four strikeouts and four walks.
- A** With a sixth-inning walk May 27 against Florida, **Chipper Jones** reached 1,377 bases on balls for his career and surpassed Hall of Famer **Eddie Mathews** for the Braves franchise record.
- A** **Brian McCann** once again decided to play without wearing glasses.
- A** **Jason Heyward** injured his left thumb on May 14 when he caught it on the base while sliding head-first.
- A** **Chipper Jones** missed several games in early June and was day to day due to a sore right ring finger. He received a cortisone shot June 5.
- A** Outfielder **Brent Clevlen** went on the disabled list May 25 with a toe sprain, and **Gregor Blanco** was recalled to replace him.



## WE HAVE A FEW HITTERS DUE IN THE SECOND HALF

**ALL OF US THOUGHT** coming out of spring training that we had a real good team. We got off to a slow start, and we all scratched our heads a little and wondered why. But like everything else, sometimes it takes a while to happen. Once our guys settled in, they've played well ever since.

I still feel they're capable of doing even more once all eight starters begin to swing the bat like they're accustomed to doing. We haven't had that yet.

We've pitched well, and the bullpen has been terrific. Most importantly, we've received contributions from all parts of the team.

There's not a team in baseball that wouldn't like to have a pitcher like Jair Jurrjens coming back at mid-season. He'll be a big boost. The starting pitchers have really done a great job.

Derek Lowe has bounced back and is pitching well and looks like he's on the beam now. Tim Hudson has been terrific since Day 1. Tommy Hanson has been the same. Except for some bad luck, he'd have more wins.

There's no way Kenshin Kawakami should be 0-8. We score runs when Lowe pitches, but not when Kawakami pitches. Both have pitched well and given us a chance to win.

And Kris Medlen has pitched well and done everything else, too. Hitting, baserunning, fielding, picking off baserunners. He's a National League pitcher, for sure. When he made some starts last year, it was hard for him to slow down. He goes 100 miles per hour all the time, and it's tough for him to stay within himself. He's clearly someone that needs to manage his energy and emotions, and he's done that.

I think Martin Prado should make the NL All-Star team for sure, and I'd say Troy Glaus is next in line for that honor on our team. Those are the prime candidates in my mind. Tim Hudson should make it, too. Jason Heyward has been getting some votes, and there's still time left for him to woo more of the voters with his performance.

When we signed Glaus, we thought we were getting a professional hitter and that he would do very well once he got his timing down, and he's done just that. Where would we be without him?

We felt going in that we could build on our pitching and solidify our hitting a little more. The new guys who came in have done a great job, and we still have confidence that the guys who were already here will step up in the second half.

McLouth, Escobar, McCann and Chipper have not played even close to the standard we're used to seeing. To get back to their norms, they need to have big second halves, and we think they will do that. Our pitching will get even better, and the offense could be way better if we get everyone on track.

We're just a half game behind San Diego for the best record in the league right now and no one is playing over his head. Martin Prado has been on a steady climb, and he's just continuing that. That's what's good about where we are. We believe there's good reason to think we can play even better.

Plus, we have some other guys we hope will be coming back soon to help us. We're hopeful of getting Matt Diaz back in the next couple of weeks. His hand is progressing nicely. He's taking physical therapy every day.

McLouth is feeling much better and probably will be able to begin activity in another day or two. Takashi Saito is progressing well, too. He's scheduled to run in another day, and if that goes well, he'll be back on the mound.

Two guys that are really coming through are Brooks Conrad and Jonny Venters.

“ OUR PITCHING WILL GET EVEN BETTER, AND THE OFFENSE COULD BE WAY BETTER IF WE GET EVERYONE ON TRACK. ”



## HANGING UP #47

**TOM GLAVINE** will join the very select company of former Braves to have their uniform number permanently retired Aug. 6, when he also will be inducted into the Braves Hall of Fame. Glavine's number (47) will be just the seventh in franchise history to be taken out of circulation, following **Greg Maddux** (31), who received the same honor last year, along with **Hank Aaron** (44), **Eddie Mathews** (41), **Dale Murphy** (3), **Phil Niekro** (35) and **Warren Spahn** (21). The Braves also retired number 42, along with all Major League Baseball teams, to honor **Jackie Robinson**, who played his entire career with the Dodgers.

The ceremony to retire Glavine's number will take place prior to that night's game against the Giants. Glavine's induction into the Braves Hall of Fame will take place earlier Aug. 6 at a luncheon open to all fans. Tickets are \$125 and include lunch with a current or former Braves player, manager or coach. The location for the event has not been announced. The luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. and is preceded by a silent auction at 10:45. For information about luncheon tickets, call (404) 614-2310.

Glavine, who owns 305 career wins (244 as a Brave) and two Cy Young Awards (1991, '98), delivered the most clutch pitching performance in Atlanta history on the night of Oct. 28, 1995, when he pitched a master-

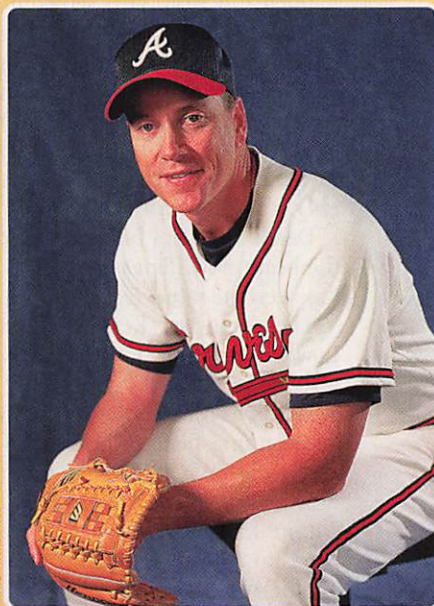
ful 1-hit shutout over eight innings when the Braves beat a powerful Cleveland team, 1-0, to win the only World Series Championship in the city's history.

Glavine, who is currently a special assistant to Braves president **John Schuerholz** and is also a broadcaster on some Braves radio and TV broadcasts, spent 19 years in the Braves organization. He was drafted by the Braves in 1984 and was with the team through the 2002 season before he signed as a free agent with the New York Mets. After five seasons with the Mets, Glavine returned to the Braves in 2008.

He ranks 21st on the all-time career victory list and fourth for most wins by a left-handed pitcher behind Spahn, **Steve Carlton** and **Eddie Plank**. In 518 starts for the Braves, Glavine compiled a 244-147 record with a 3.41 ERA. In 1995, he was named the World Series MVP after going 2-0 with a 1.29 ERA.

Glavine, 44 years old, will be the 22nd inductee into the Braves Hall of Fame, joining Aaron, **Bill Bartholomay**, **Lou Burdette**, **Skip Caray**, **Del Crandall**, **Ralph Garr**, **Tommy Holmes**, **Ernie Johnson**, **David Justice**, **Herman**

**Long**, **Bill Lucas**, Maddux, Mathews, Murphy, **Kid Nichols**, Niekro, **John Sain**, **Paul Snyder**, Spahn, **Ted Turner** and **Pete Van Wieren**.



Tom Glavine, who will be inducted into the Braves Hall of Fame and have his number retired Aug. 6, is the fourth-winningest left-hander in history.

## MAKE A DATE

Make plans now for the first Date Night on the Diamond Saturday, July 31, at Turner Field. The event promises "an exclusive evening of wining, dining and fun at Turner Field." Fans will be served a three-course meal under the stars on the warning track, while watching the Braves-Reds game live on the seven-story BravesVision video board in center field. Fans also will also have the unique opportunity to take batting practice in the Braves' batting cages, go behind-the-scenes on a VIP Turner Field tour, and win Braves autographed items in a raffle. The affair includes a three-course meal and one bottle of wine for a table for two; two bottles of wine for a table for four; and four bottles of wine for a table of eight. The cost is \$450

for two people, \$700 for four people, and \$1,500 for a table of eight. Make reservations before July 29 by calling (404) 614-1557.

## REAL ALL-STARS

Major League Baseball, PEOPLE magazine, and the Braves announced the three finalists and the start of voting for the 2010 "PEOPLE All-Stars Among Us" national campaign, which recognizes individuals who are serving the community in extraordinary ways.

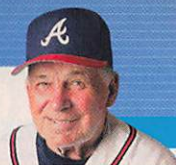
The three Braves finalists are **Daniel Feuer** of Atlanta, **Bruce Deel** of Tyrone, Ga., and **Austin Gutwein** of Mesa, Ariz. The 90 finalists (three per MLB club) were selected from thousands of online submissions by

fans across the U.S. and Canada who nominated their local "All-Stars." A total of 30 "All-Stars," one representing each team, will be honored at All-Star Week in Anaheim, including recognition during the pre-game ceremony of the All-Star Game on July 13. One of the winners will be featured in PEOPLE during the week of the All-Star Game.

At age 12, Feuer began making smoothies for cancer patients receiving chemotherapy. Five years later, Smoothie Kidz has over 70 high school volunteers and is on its way to becoming a non-profit organization. This year, Smoothie Kidz serves six locations: three major hospitals and three major oncology practices.

Deel founded City of Refuge, a non-profit that provides programs and services to





individuals and families in Atlanta who are in need. In 13 years, it has grown to serve over 10,000 people annually.

In the spring of 2004, 9-year-old Gutwein, a major Braves fan, decided to shoot free throws to raise money for children orphaned by AIDS. He shot 2,057 free throws and raised nearly \$3,000. Today his Hoops of Hope basketball shoot-a-thon program has raised over \$1.8 million to help children orphaned by the disease.

## HOMECOMING!

The Braves were to host their first Alumni Weekend June 25-28 to benefit the Atlanta Braves Foundation. Alumni including **Paul Assenmacher, Tony Brizzolara, Bruce Benedict, Sid Bream, Rick Camp, Brad Clontz, Gene Garber, Marquis Grissom, Jay Howell, Brian Hunter, Brian Jordan, Greg McMichael, Jim Nash, Otis Nixon, Eddie Perez, Charlie Puleo, Craig Skok, Pete Smith, Zane Smith, Jeff Treadway**, and more were to take part in events throughout the weekend including meet and greets with fans, a Celebrity Softball Classic (2:30 p.m.) before Saturday's game, the second annual Diamond Gala on Sunday evening at the Loews Hotel Atlanta, and the Atlanta Braves Foundation Golf Classic on Monday morning at East Lake Country Club.

## BALLS & STRIKES

- A** Through a series of messages on the BravesVision video board during the May 15 game, **Matt Diaz** spoke to fans at Turner Field to help raise awareness about the fight against ALS - Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease.
- A** Milwaukee Public Television won the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association award for best documentary for "Braves New World," about the Milwaukee Braves, produced by **Bill Povletich**.
- A** Prostate Cancer Survivors received a free game ticket, t-shirt and the opportunity to participate in a special on-field ceremony before the game on Father's Day, June 20.
- A** Fans literally raced to Turner Field on June 19 during the Atlanta Track Club's Father's Day 4 Miler, which finished on the warning track near the Braves' dugout.

## SECOND HALF SHOULD BE VERY INTERESTING

**ONE OF MY** memorable All-Star Game experiences was the first year I got to manage the National League in 1992. The game was held in San Diego at old Jack Murphy Stadium. It's a great city to visit, and we really enjoyed ourselves.

Willie Mays visited our clubhouse for about three hours and talked with me and our coaches and players. David Justice and Ron Gant were there and got to meet him and talk to him. The president, the first President George Bush, came to our clubhouse, too, and we talked with him. It was really special, unforgettable.

I also got to manage the All-Star team in 2000 at Turner Field. There's nothing in the world like being in your own city, your own ballpark, managing the All-Star team.

In all, I've had the opportunity to manage five different National League All-Star teams, and each time it was unique. The game is fun. It's great meeting all the different players.

The first half has flown by, and, no, I haven't changed my mind. I'm still planning to retire!

But this is a great group of guys to work with, to watch play every night. I think our fans have really enjoyed watching them play. I always say it takes all 25 guys on a team to get the wins, and we've had to rely on all of them this first half.

I don't like to name a team MVP, but if you were going to highlight someone's performance in the first half, you have to talk about Martin Prado. He's leading the league in hitting. He has played stellar defense. He was a catalyst for us last season, and he picked up where he left off.

As far as our pitching staff in the first half, overall I give the whole staff high marks. Tim Hudson has slipped right back into pitching like the ace he was. His stuff has gotten even nastier! Our entire bullpen gets an "A." They've been outstanding.

Unfortunately, we have one of the unluckiest players in baseball on our pitching staff in Kenshin Kawakami. He has pitched so much better than his record. We haven't gotten any runs for the guy.

We can't say enough good things about our bench. They've been brilliant. Eric Hinske and Omar Infante have been good wherever we play them. Brooks Conrad is the kind of player that gets in the game and starts getting dirty, making an impact with his fielding and hitting and hustle. In the last game in Arizona (June 10), he was banged up, dirty and out of breath within minutes of getting in the game. These guys mean so much to our team.

Nate McLouth was shaken up, bad, in that collision with Jason Heyward. He really took a hit. There was no way we were going to take any chances with him playing while he was still feeling the effects. He had headaches and concussion symptoms. It made sense to put him on the disabled list until those symptoms were gone.

When we broke camp, we believed we had a good team, but you just never know what is in store for you. We lost Jair Jurrjens for practically the entire first half, but when he gets back, it's going to be like the biggest pickup of the trade deadline. He will make that much of an impact.

We have a good, competitive team. We have guys who go out every night believing that they can win and working to make it happen.

This team had a tough run early in the season but believed in their ability to win. They've battled back and played some really good baseball. I can't wait to see what the second half will bring.

“ **WHEN HE (JAIR JURRJENS) GETS BACK, IT'S GOING TO BE LIKE THE BIGGEST PICKUP OF THE TRADE DEADLINE.** ”





POUYA DANA/ATLANTA BRAVES

INTERVIEW BY  
PATTY RASMUSSEN

**CHOPTALK:** Did you vote for yourself for the All-Star team?

**JASON HEYWARD:** No, I didn't vote for myself. I voted online for Martin Prado and some other guys, though.

**CT:** You attended the MLB Rookie Training program in January. How well did it prepare you for what you've faced the first two months of the season?

**HEYWARD:** It was good to be in that environment with guys who were going to be in the same situation you're going to be in. It's good to get their perspective, to bounce ideas off each other and things like that. It's good to have conversation about what you're about to be going through. That was probably the best thing about it.

**CT:** You've been inundated with media requests. How did you get comfortable dealing with the media? Did your agent provide any training for you?

**HEYWARD:** The Braves do a good job of that in the minor leagues. We have meetings in spring training about how to deal with the media. It's very helpful, and it starts there. Other than that, I just try to be

myself. I'm comfortable with who I am.

**CT:** What's been the biggest adjustment between the lines?

**HEYWARD:** Honestly, it's been to make sure I take care of everything outside the lines so I can do my job between the lines. By that, I mean everything leading up to the game and everything after the game.

**CT:** Are you talking about your work or about "life"? You don't want to be thinking about paying bills when you're in right field?

**HEYWARD:** Not even that. That's not a thought for me, because I have people who help me with that. I mean it may be media interviews, it may be making the time to sign this or that, maybe for a foundation or for fans in the stands. You have to balance all that with doing your job. Even things like rain delays can throw you off, and you need to make sure you're doing everything you can to prepare for the game. Ever since I was 10 years old, I knew that I wanted to do this. And then as you get closer to it, you realize more things that you need to do to accomplish it. I accepted that. I put myself around the right people, whether it was hitting instruction, an agent, and found the

people to help me. I just want to go out and have fun playing the game. Everything else needs to be handled like a business. That's another big thing. A lot of people don't understand that this is a business along with being a game. As far as the game goes, I know there's only so much you can do. It's the same game, with the same tradition and the same respect that I've always had for it. I like to play hard. I like to hustle. I like to be a good teammate. That's the in-between the lines. As far as the business, you have to treat it like any business. You have to be respectful. You have to learn a little bit about your craft. You have to know the people that you're dealing with. It goes with being a good person. Treat other people the way you want to be treated. It's professionalism. I'd treat any career I was in the same way. This is just a bigger stage.

**CT:** You've already had a bunch of incredible moments. Which was your favorite and why?

**HEYWARD:** I can't pick one. I honestly can't. I think, however long my career is, when I'm done, I'll be able to look back and say, "That was fun." It's been special to be part of this team. It's my first major league team, and it will always be special. They've made it fun for me. I've been able to be myself, come here every day and have fun and not worry about whether I'm in the right place, the wrong place. We all have fun together. They allow me to have fun being 20

**“ EVER SINCE I WAS 10 YEARS OLD, I KNEW THAT I WANTED TO DO THIS. ”**

years old and the youngest on the team. But I feel like I fit in with them. We all get along.

**CT:** How long had you been planning to try to get No. 22 in honor of your friend and former high school teammate, Andrew "Andy" Wilmut, who was killed in a car accident, and his mother (your former teacher), Tammy Ruston?

**HEYWARD:** It was about two weeks before we were going to spring training. I



realized that I could make the team out of spring training. In the Arizona Fall League, I already had No. 22, on an authentic jersey that we wear in the major leagues. So, I thought, "Well, I already have a jersey, and if I make the team and am able to pick a number, I want it to be No. 22. That way I could give Ms. Ruston the jersey, and she'd be the first one with the actual jersey." It happened just like that.

**CT:** Did you select No. 22 in the Fall League? You didn't even get to play [due to hamstringing gluteal strain].

**HEYWARD:** I didn't pick the number. They just gave it to me. I knew No. 22 was Andy's number. I'd never forgotten that, but I wasn't even thinking about it at that point. But when the opportunity came to do something, I did it.

**CT:** You've said that Ms. Ruston taught you that sometimes you have to "do things you don't feel like doing, I could see that coming for me in professional baseball." What did you mean by that, specifically?

**HEYWARD:** I actually learned that throughout my life, from my parents. I knew it already, but her situation, every day in front of me during my senior year of high school, was a real testimony. She was com-

ing to teach classes at the same school building where her son had gone to school, teaching the same kids he was friends with. She still came to baseball games and saw us, even though it was a reminder of her son. That was amazing to me. She loved her students and put everything into it. If that doesn't show you an example to keep going, even when it's hard, you're missing something. I'm appreciative of that from her.

**CT:** You like to write. What do you write? Stories? Poetry?

**HEYWARD:** I guess you could take it as poetry. It does rhyme.

**CT:** Is it rap?

**HEYWARD:** It could fit all of the above. For me, it's just my thoughts. It's just letting go, enjoying something, having fun with it. I write on my laptop or on my cell phone. I write when something strikes me. I have fun with it, challenge myself and see how far I can go with it, whether I can improve upon it. They always rhyme.

**CT:** Are you a movie fan?

**HEYWARD:** I like movies, but I think I like music more than movies. I like mostly

hip-hop because of the lyrics and how it's structured. The artist I relate to the most is a young guy named "Drake." He hasn't dropped his first album yet, but it's coming out soon. The things he's going through in his life, stardom, coming into his own in the entertainment profession, is something I can relate to.

**CT:** Can you go to the mall or out to dinner without being recognized? Is it cool or uncomfortable to be recognized?

**HEYWARD:** No, not any more, and if it's a crowded place, I probably won't be there. I'm comfortable with me, with who I am, so I'm fine with being recognized. But it depends on whether people respect your

**I LIKE TO PLAY HARD. I LIKE TO HUSTLE. I LIKE TO BE A GOOD TEAMMATE.**

space or not. It's cool to be recognized and to have fans that appreciate you and the way you play. As long as people are respectful, I'm okay with it.

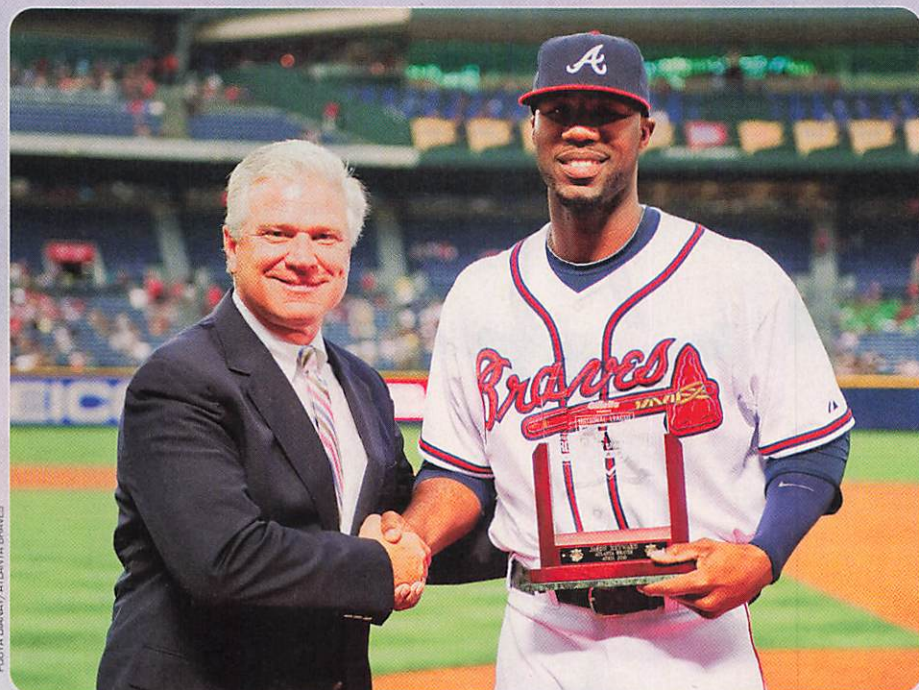
**CT:** How does it feel to see people wearing Braves shirts with your name and number on the back?

**HEYWARD:** It's very cool. They could pick anybody, so the fact that that many people appreciate the way I play the game and how I go out and hustle and entertain them when they come to the game or watch on television is cool. I'm really thankful for it. I appreciate my fans.

**CT:** Hank Aaron said that you could "mean an awful lot to what ails baseball" with regard to bringing young black players back to the game. How did you feel, what did you think, when you heard that statement? Was that something you took to heart, or did you feel it was too much pressure on you?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 49

Heyward was named NL Rookie of the Month for both April and May, and here he receives the first of the two awards from Frank Wren.



POUYA DANAEI/ATLANTA BRAVES



BY JON COOPER

# 'SKEEF BALL

**Eric Hinske**  
Brings Fun  
To The Clubhouse  
& Left-Handed Pop  
To The Lineup





**THE LATE BROOKLYN DODGERS** Hall of Fame catcher Roy Campanella summed up what it takes to be a successful baseball player as, "You gotta be a man to play baseball for a living, but you gotta have a lot of little boy in you, too."

That's Eric Hinske to a T.

"I try to act like I'm 20 every day I come to the field," said the 32-year-old Hinske, who made the Braves his sixth team in nine seasons when he signed a one-year, free-agent contract with Atlanta Jan. 12. "I play hard. I want to go out there and get my uniform dirty and do what I can to help the team win. I never want to grow up. I want to play this game forever."

He may not play forever, but his ability to contribute and his knack of ending up in the World Series - he's played in the last three, winning in 2007 with Boston and 2009 with the Yankees and reaching in '08 with Tampa Bay - isn't lost in the ever-superstitious world of baseball, where teams are always looking for a good-luck charm.

"A lot of people have called me that," Hinske said. "That's fine. It keeps me getting a job every year, right?" he said with a laugh. "I've been in the right spot. I was lucky to get traded from the Pirates to the Yankees last year, but I bring a lot to the team. I understand it takes 25 guys to win, and no matter if you're the star or the 25th guy on the roster, you're important. You're part of the team. Take your job seriously."

Not projected as a starter when the season began, Hinske has swung a seriously hot bat, especially against right-handed pitching. He finished May batting .352 against right-handers (second in the National League and eighth in the majors) while hitting .339 overall for the month, with a .679 slugging percentage, a 1.085 OPS (one-base plus slugging), four homers and driving in 14 runs. He's been a valuable presence as part of the left field platoon with Melky Cabrera, deployed by the Braves since the injury to Matt Diaz.

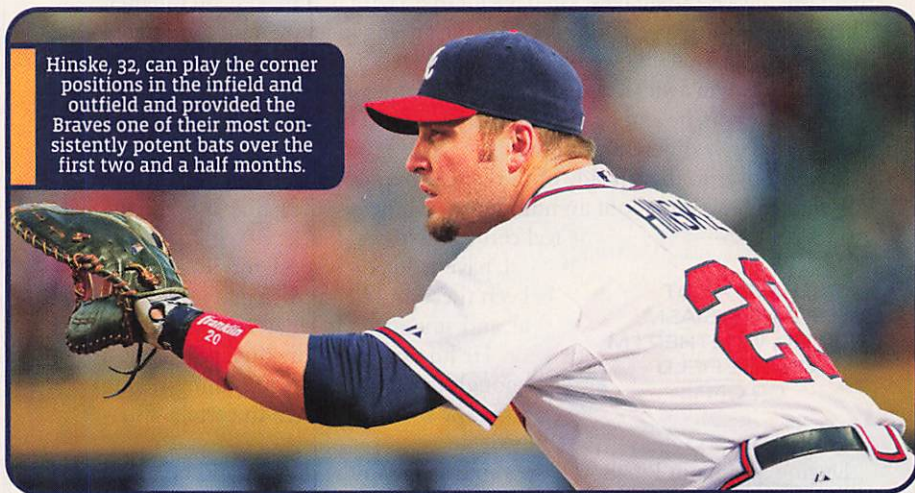
"He's a professional hitter. He takes his job very seriously, whether it's starting or coming off the bench," said Chipper Jones.

"Skee," as he's known around the clubhouse has been as serious in staying ready and keeping himself sharp. Every day he goes through a routine that includes working out in the weight room, hitting off the tee, then getting cuts in the cage. It's common for Hinske to show up around 1:30 p.m. for a 7 o'clock game and finish his routine sometime around 3:45, just in time for team batting practice (he shortens his routine for day games).

When he's not in the lineup, he has a regimen during the game to be ready, in case he's called on to pinch-hit.

"The pinch-hit role, you live and die by one at-bat," said Hinske, who hit his third career pinch-homer on May 23 to tie a game at Pittsburgh. "It's almost like being a closer, without the consequences. My deal is to start getting ready in the fourth, start stretching, take my swings in the cage. I just want to make sure I'm sweating when I

Hinske, 32, can play the corner positions in the infield and outfield and provided the Braves one of their most consistently potent bats over the first two and a half months.



go up there to pinch-hit. I want to feel like I've been playing in the game when I go up there, have my heart rate going a little."

The combination of work ethic and experience makes Hinske a valuable resource, especially to rookies like Brooks Conrad.

"He's a guy to talk to and see what he thinks about in certain situations as a pinch-hitter," said Conrad. "Any time you can talk to guys who have a lot of experience in the same role that you have, it's a really great tool to use. He's a role model. You can definitely learn from him."

Hinske was a three-sport star at Menasha (Wisconsin) High School and a three-year star at the University of Arkansas, where he still holds the school single-season runs record (87), and is in the school's top 10 in RBIs, extra-base hits, walks, runs, slugging and doubles. He was a 17th-round pick of the Chicago Cubs in the 1998 draft, got as high as Triple-A Iowa in 1999 before being traded to Oakland in 2001, then, after one season with

Sacramento (Triple-A), Hinske was acquired by Toronto in December 2001.

Given the opportunity to start at third base, he became the second Blue Jay to win American League Rookie of the Year, setting career highs with 24 homers and 84 RBIs. But by 2005, he was moved to first base and the next year to the outfield after Toronto acquired third baseman Troy Glaus and first baseman Lyle Overbay.

"I'm sure it was disappointing for him, but he didn't sit back and pout," recalled Glaus, coincidentally acquired by Atlanta one week before Hinske. "He just went out and adapted to a new role and has gotten extremely good at it."

Hinske was shipped to Boston on Aug. 17, 2006, and, in 2007, found a mentor in

Alex Cora, the Sox middle-infield bench player. He discovered a new approach to working out and began to take on his role as bench-player extraordinaire and good-luck charm.

The versatility and production have come in handy with Atlanta. He has been one of the Braves' best hitters against right-handed pitching and, with Conrad, David Ross and Omar Infante, gives Atlanta one of the game's most-dependable and versatile benches.

There is the colorful side of Hinske — his back, specifically. His body art, depicting an illustration of a Japanese warrior, is well-known. It is an extension of his enthusiasm for something that has poignant origins. His first tattoo was a cross on his left arm with the words, "In memory of George," a tribute to his grandfather, who was an instrumental part of his baseball career, but passed away shortly before Hinske

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## I'VE WORKED HARDER THIS YEAR THAN EVER

**PEOPLE ASK ME ALL THE TIME** which I prefer, starting or relieving, but I just like pitching. I like the game. Being an infielder in college, I got a chance to appreciate both sides of the game, from the viewpoint of being a position player and a pitcher. I just love the game. Whatever I can do to help my team win, I'm going to do it. I'm having success as a starter, but when JJ (Jair Jurrjens) comes back, I'll go back to the 'pen. I'm very realistic about that, just taking it one start at a time.

I haven't really changed my approach. I just want to be as aggressive as possible and utilize however many innings or pitches I'm allowed to throw. I said before I started this year I wasn't going to change anything, because I think things have worked out for me. I've always been pretty competitive as a kid. Whatever sport we were playing, I was striving to be the best. I think the fact that I was always the smallest kid has a lot to do with it. It makes you tougher. There's never the expectation that, "Oh, he's going to go out and dominate."

Talking with Derek Lowe has helped me. He knows a lot about baseball, and every once in awhile, would call me over and ask me why I threw a pitch I threw. Last year, he and I talked before that start I had in Arizona, and I felt like a completely different pitcher.

I moved over to the left side of the rubber because Roger suggested it and talked to D-Lowe for about an hour and a half before the game. It made me feel comfortable.

**" I HAVE A LOT OF ENTHUSIASM, PERIOD. WHETHER I'M ON THE FIELD OR OFF... "**

I have a lot of respect for Roger. He's been there and he knows what level we're at and understands what we're trying to do. He knows each individual pitcher well enough to know what we're doing wrong and how we should pitch in certain situations.

During a game in Pittsburgh, he came to me in the dugout and talked to me about throwing inside. I had hit Lastings Milledge, and then Ronny Cedenro was up with two outs, and David Ross called for a fastball inside and I shook (him off).

When I went in the dugout, Roger asked me why I didn't want to throw inside. I explained I already hit one guy, and if I threw inside and missed again... I guess I was thinking negatively. He told me, "Go in hard - don't be scared. If you hit him, you hit him. Who cares?"

Derek and I have talked about taking medication for attention deficit disorder (ADD). I've never taken it and don't really want to. Most people have said, "Don't worry about it."

I feel myself sometimes losing focus, pitch by pitch, but I talk to myself on the mound. I look at the ground and talk to myself, say, "C'mon, make this pitch." It brings me back to the situation I'm in. Helps me regain focus.

I have a lot of enthusiasm, period. Whether I'm on the field or off, playing baseball or just at home, I'm the same no matter what. On the mound, I have a little different focus because I have to be a professional.

This year I've worked harder than I have my whole life. I realized my role and knew I needed to raise my stamina, because I might be called on for more than just an inning or two out of the 'pen, which is the situation I'm in now.

I talked to (strength and conditioning coach) Phil Falco and worked out this off-season with (Gwinnett pitcher) Ryne Reynoso. I don't really believe you have to be "in shape" to play baseball, because if my arm's okay, I can pitch. But Ryne was big on saying, "Get up, let's go." I give him a lot of credit, because I don't know if I would have worked as hard on my own.

reached the majors.

Perhaps the most colorful part of Hinske, however, is his colorful use of language, something that endears him to teammates.

"From day one, he's brought a lot of jokes and he's a good guy to have around just to keep it light," said Ross. "He's a great guy to have on the plane. There are some things — they're unprintable — let's say he's got some good quotes that are funny that keep everybody laughing."

"Some of them are just for the clubhouse," added Conrad, with a laugh. "He's just so funny. He comes up with something new every day, and we'll say it for a little while and then he'll come up with something else and we'll start saying that. He's definitely a guy to come up with some funny phrases."

Included are the term "Bridged," (meaning hitting a home run off a pitcher, which became part of Chipper Jones' post-game comments following Conrad's historic pinch-hit, walk-off grand slam against Cincinnati on May 20), and to "Nuke" a ball (a Tim Hudson favorite), which means to blast it, and countless others. But there is one universal Hinske favorite.

"Pro," said Jones, breaking into a grin. "Everything is 'pro' with him. You take 'pro' batting practice or have a 'pro' at-bat, have a 'pro' approach or jerseys look 'pro.' That's his big gig."

"I know it's a job and there's a lot of pressure and everything, but it should be fun," explained Hinske. "If you're here and you're miserable, why are you doing it? This is a game. I come in, say hi to everybody, make sure everybody's having a good time, be loud at times and just have fun."

It's the kind of fun needed to break the tensions of the 162-game season.

"He brings energy to the clubhouse every day," said Derek Lowe. "It's always important to have different types of personalities, especially in our sport, where we spend so much time together. You have to have a loose clubhouse and a fun clubhouse, and we definitely have that. He has a lot to do with it."

"He's fantastic," added Glaus. "He shows up ready to play every day, regardless if he's in the lineup or not, and just brings a lot of positive energy."

Hinske hasn't changed his ways, even though the team has, for the better.

"We've been going to team dinners on the road - 15, 16 players strong sometimes - and just having a great time," he said. "I know winning breeds fun, and you're having more fun when you're winning, but you have to try to have fun every day."



# SLEEPING ON THE JOB

**Even As A Minor League Manager, Cox Was All-Consumed By His Responsibilities**

BY PATTY RASMUSSEN

**TO SAY BOBBY COX** has always lived and breathed baseball is an understatement.

"When we came to spring training in 1971," recalled Marty Appel, former public relations director for the Yankees, "we learned he was living at the clubhouse. There was a cot in the equipment room where he slept."

Cox's playing days ended in 1970, two

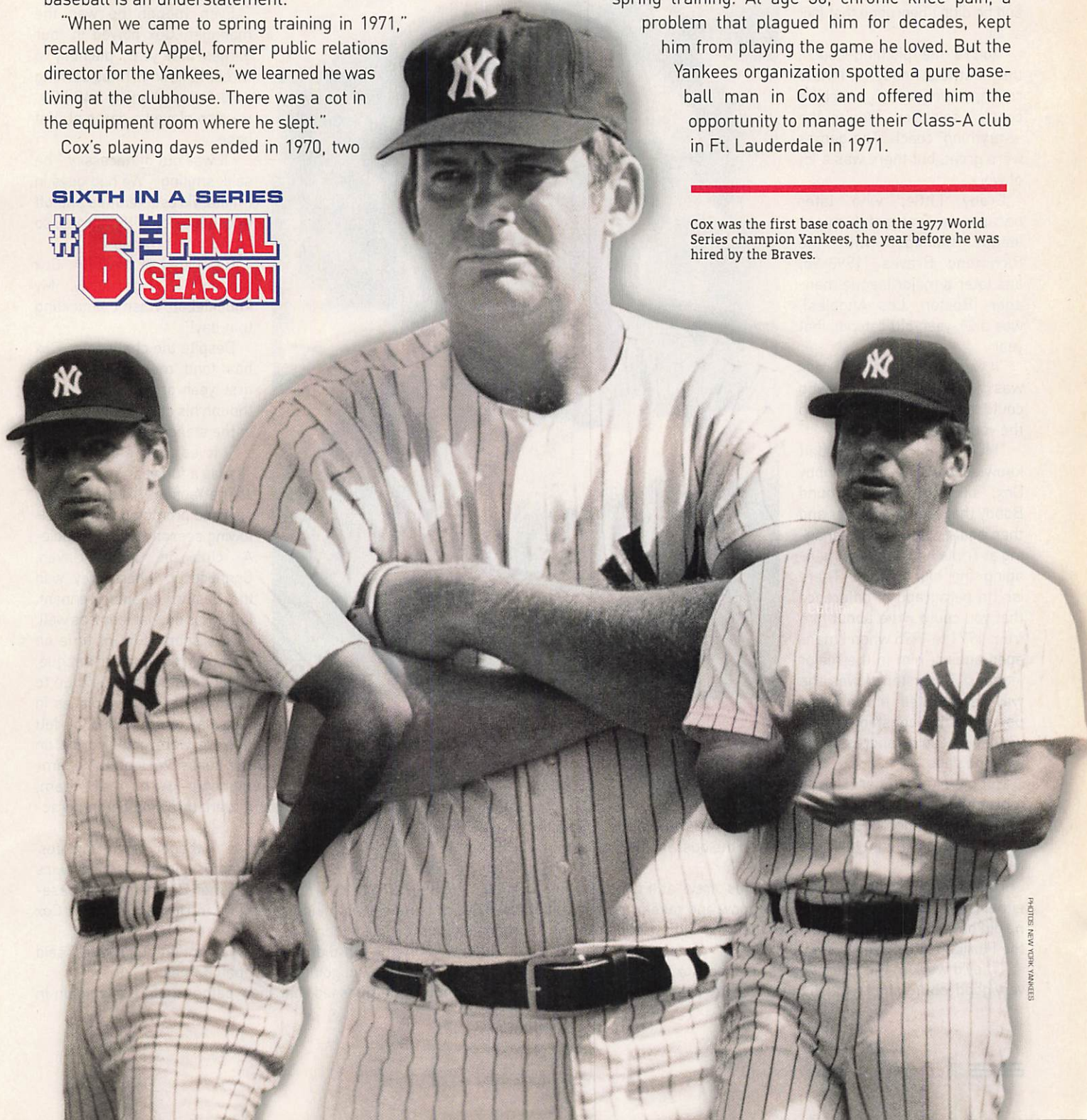
years after he made the New York Yankees out of spring training. At age 30, chronic knee pain, a problem that plagued him for decades, kept him from playing the game he loved. But the Yankees organization spotted a pure baseball man in Cox and offered him the opportunity to manage their Class-A club in Ft. Lauderdale in 1971.

SIXTH IN A SERIES

#6 **THE FINAL SEASON**

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Cox was the first base coach on the 1977 World Series champion Yankees, the year before he was hired by the Braves.





"I wasn't ready to end my career with baseball, and I wasn't going to pass up that opportunity to manage," he said. "They paid me \$7,000 that season, but it cost me \$3,000 (in living expenses) to work."

It didn't matter. Cox was determined to give everything he had to the players on his team. "My expectation going in was that I was going to make every player a major leaguer," he said. "That's true. That's the way I went into it. I think that was my job as a minor league instructor."

He knew his role was so much more than a manager, and he didn't begrudge that fact at all.

"You're the pitching coach, the outfield coach, infield coach, hitting coach, catching coach," said Cox. "You're the 'everything' coach. The games were great, but there was a lot of work."

Grady Little, who later became a successful minor league manager with the Richmond Braves (1993-95) and later a major league manager (Boston, Los Angeles), was a 21-year-old catcher that year.

"It was great, because Grady was a veteran catcher who could actually think and help the young guys," said Cox.

"Much of my baseball knowledge came from Bobby Cox," said Little. "I was around Bobby that year as a player and then again when I was managing at Triple A and he was managing the big leagues. There isn't a paragraph of difference that you could write about him from 1971 to 1995 when I managed against him in the major leagues. Consistency was the way he operated, and his values remained constant. That's why he's been so successful at what he does."

But Little remembers Cox as more than just a manager.

"You're a father figure, a psychologist, a batting coach," said Little. "Heck, he might have even driven the bus! You do it all at that level."

There wasn't a professional grounds crew at Ft. Lauderdale either and, though Cox didn't have to mow and rake grass himself, he did have to keep tabs on the crew he had - inmates on loan from the Florida state prison system!

"They'd work in the afternoons," recalled Cox. "They didn't do a very good job. You had to push them to work. I caught a couple guys

drinking Aqua Velva in the clubhouse because it had alcohol in it!"

One afternoon, Cox was barking at the prison crew because they were running off the field when it was starting to look like rain.

"Let's go! Let's put the tarp on," Cox chuckled as he told the story. "But they had taken off running. I'm yelling at them, but then I looked up toward the lumberyard that was across the street. Lumber was flying straight up in the air. There was a pole roof over

the place, and it was flying up in the sky, twirling around over everything. We were gonna have a tornado! I said, 'Whoa! I better run, too!'"

Even though he was the manager, Cox played in four games that year, pitching in three, 10 innings total, earning an 0-1 record and a 5.40 ERA. He also played a game at first base.

"It was out of necessity," he said, smiling. "We had guys in (military) reserve units and off to colleges or with injuries, so I brought us through!"

Reminded of his ERA, Cox replied, "They got lucky. My knuckleball wasn't knuckling that day!"

Despite the challenges, Cox has fond memories of that first year of managing, even though his club finished fourth in the standings.

"I loved that year," he said. "It was a fun year."

The Yankees liked what they saw and promoted Cox the following season to their Double-A club in West Haven, Connecticut, where they won the Eastern League pennant. Little was on that team, as well.

"We spent a lot of time on the bus in the Eastern League, because we were riding up to Montreal and other places in Canada," said Little. "It felt like we were going to die on the buses. We won the championship with that team,

though and, as always, Bobby was out there throwing batting practice and even hitting infield."

From 1973 until 1976, Cox served as manager of the Yankees' Triple-A team in Syracuse, N.Y. His teams placed second twice (1974, '76) and third twice ('73, '75). Former Braves second baseman, Mark Lemke, was a kid growing up in Utica, N.Y., when Cox managed the Syracuse team.

"I knew his name but didn't really know much about him," said Lemke. "I was just a kid going to baseball games."

Who would have guessed that their paths would cross again in



Seen here in 1975, Cox was in the midst of a four-year term as manager of the Yankees' Triple-A team at Syracuse, N.Y. (1973-76) that groomed him for a return to the majors.

NEW YORK YANKEES

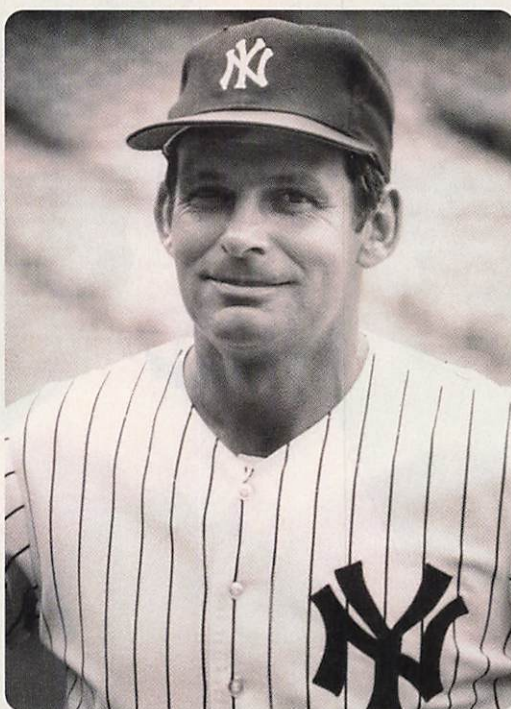


the Braves organization, and that Lemke would become one of Cox's favorite players, a close friend to this day?

In 1977, Cox got the call once again to the big leagues, becoming the first base coach of the New York Yankees. Billy Martin, one of the Yankees' most mercurial managers and, at least in style, the antithesis of Cox, was skipper of a team that included Thurman Munson, Reggie Jackson, Willie Randolph, Graig Nettles, Lou Piniella and Chris Chambliss. The Yankees went 100-62 that season, defeated the Kansas City Royals, three games to two in the American League Championship Series, then went on to defeat the Dodgers, the team that initially drafted Cox, four games to two, in the World Series.

Chambliss, who later played for Cox from 1980-86 when he managed the Braves, said Cox the coach was as encouraging and patient as Cox the manager.

"He was always consistent and low key," said Chambliss. "He was old school and kept people in line by not changing. That carried over to the way he managed, as well."



Cox was a happy man when Billy Martin picked him for his staff in 1977 on a team loaded with stars that was headed for 100 wins and the World Championship.

The thing that impressed Little was, and still is, Cox's ability to communicate with his players and personnel.

"It might have been his biggest strength," said Little. "He was able to talk to people. He could be tough, but you knew he had your best interest at heart."

That attribute is something Cox picked up from his major league manager, Ralph Houk. "Ralph never said a bad thing about a player, especially not in front of the media," recalled Cox. "He was fair. He was patient, and he was consistent. He always defended his players. That's how I wanted to be."

Cox soon got his chance to manage at the big league level. After the 1977 World Series, the Atlanta Braves came calling. He was hired by owner Ted Turner and GM Bill Lucas to manage a team coming off a last-place finish with a 61-101 record.

It was quite a change from the Yankees, but Cox, always the optimist, was ready to go. He had no way of knowing what a wild ride he was in for in 1978.

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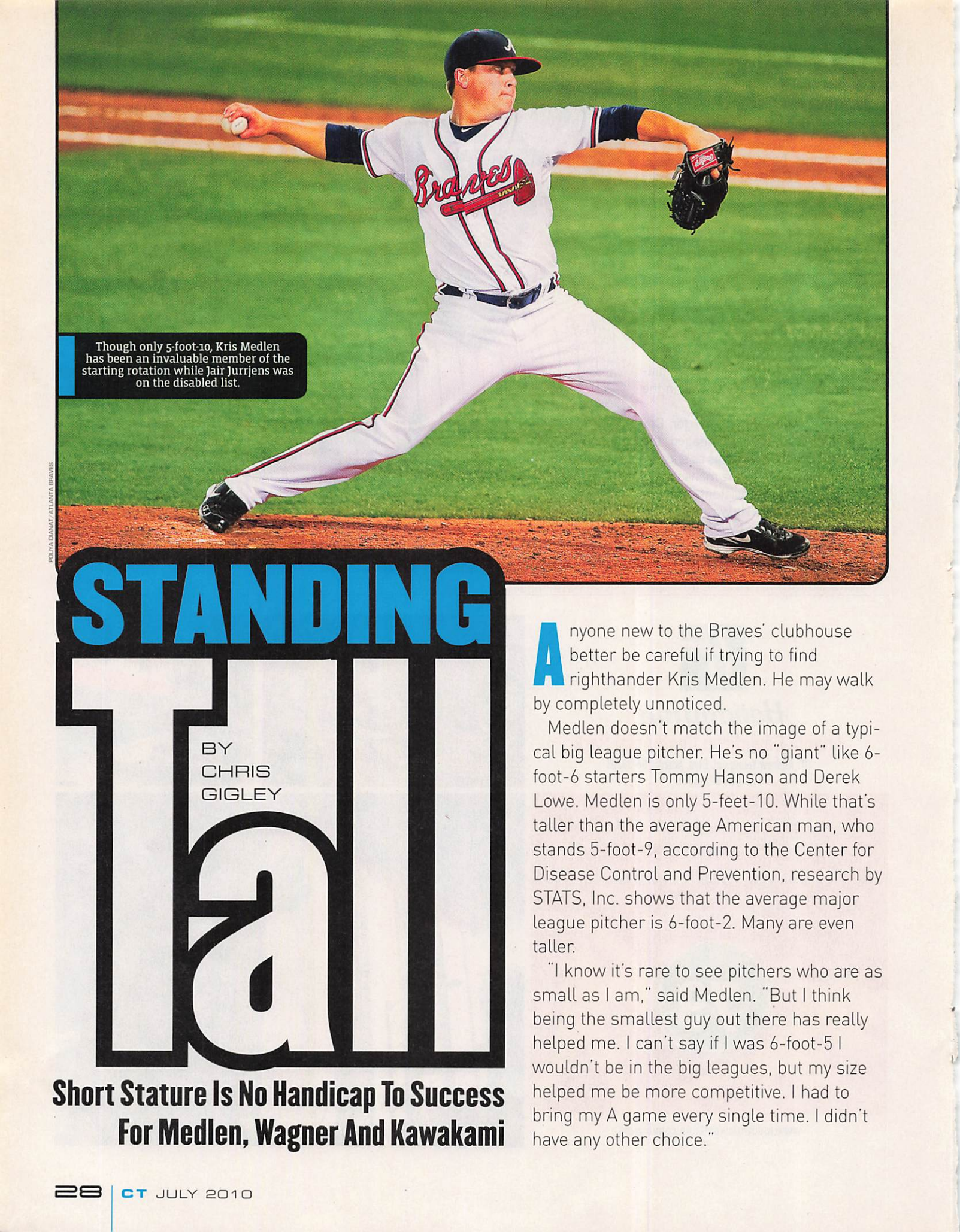
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Though only 5-foot-10, Kris Medlen has been an invaluable member of the starting rotation while Jair Jurrjens was on the disabled list.

# STANDING

BY  
CHRIS  
GIGLEY

## Short Stature Is No Handicap To Success For Medlen, Wagner And Kawakami

**A**nyone new to the Braves' clubhouse better be careful if trying to find righthander Kris Medlen. He may walk by completely unnoticed.

Medlen doesn't match the image of a typical big league pitcher. He's no "giant" like 6-foot-6 starters Tommy Hanson and Derek Lowe. Medlen is only 5-feet-10. While that's taller than the average American man, who stands 5-foot-9, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, research by STATS, Inc. shows that the average major league pitcher is 6-foot-2. Many are even taller.

"I know it's rare to see pitchers who are as small as I am," said Medlen. "But I think being the smallest guy out there has really helped me. I can't say if I was 6-foot-5 I wouldn't be in the big leagues, but my size helped me be more competitive. I had to bring my A game every single time. I didn't have any other choice."



Two of Medlen's teammates know exactly how he feels. Closer Billy Wagner is also 5-foot-10, and starter Kenshin Kawakami is 5-foot-11. As of June 1, only the New York Mets (five) and Houston Astros (four) had more sub-6-foot pitchers on the active roster than the Braves. According to STATS, Inc., just 68 of the 425 pitchers (16 percent) who have thrown at least an inning this season are 6-feet or smaller.

No one in the Braves' clubhouse seems to care, least of all Wagner, who has spent 16 seasons proving that an All-Star-caliber pitcher doesn't have to be 6-foot-2 or taller. As of June 3, Wagner had 394 career saves - third among active pitchers - and 1,125 strikeouts in 855 innings.

"There's no height requirement in baseball like there is in other sports," said Wagner. "Most of the bigger guys are thumbs anyway. I never understood that to begin with. Most of the smaller, stockier guys throw harder now than bigger guys."

He may have a point. Last year's National League strikeout leader and Cy Young winner, San Francisco Giants righthander Tim Lincecum, is 5-foot-11. Kawakami said he was regarded as a power pitcher in Japan, where he pitched for 11 seasons with the Chunichi Dragons and was considered one of the smallest pitchers in the league.

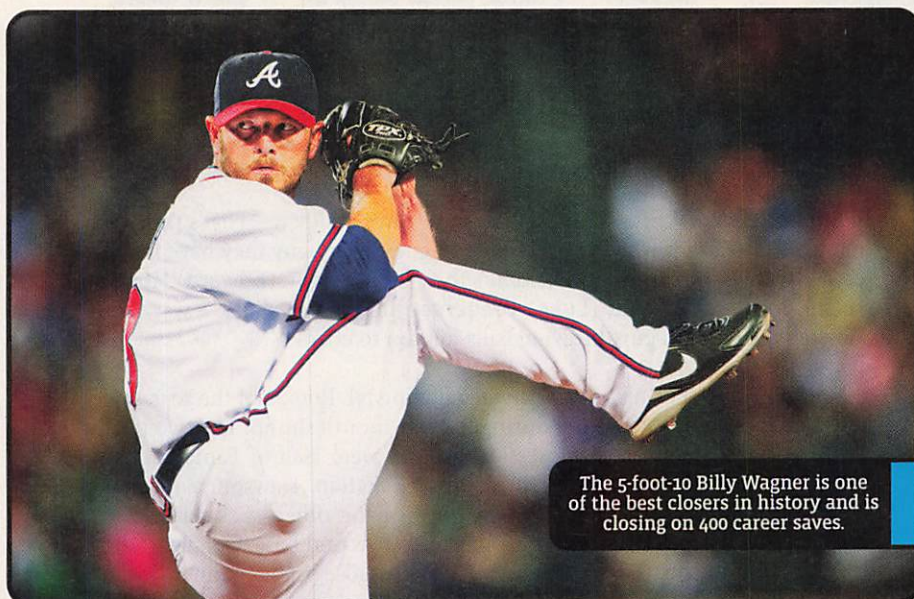
"Even though I was shorter, I had a lot more power than the taller guys," he said. "I never really thought of my height as a disadvantage."

In fact, both he and Medlen said being shorter is a plus.

Nine years ago, Paul Lagace, an MIT professor of aeronautics and astronautics, was quoted in a Sports Illustrated article examining a trend of taller pitchers in the major leagues. He made a compelling argument for the trend, comparing pitchers to machines with levers. The longer those levers - the legs, torso and pitching arm, in this case - the more velocity that pitcher can generate.

At the time, however, 5-foot-11 Pedro Martinez was manhandling the American League, and Wagner was one of the most dominant closers in the National League. Lagace said recently that those and other sub-6-foot pitchers do have one advantage over their taller peers. They have better body control.

"Look at it in terms of consistency," Lagace explained. "If you think of a pitcher as a machine, that machine is trying to make the arm and fingers do something so the ball has a certain spin with certain angles to it. When the catcher says put it



The 5-foot-10 Billy Wagner is one of the best closers in history and is closing on 400 career saves.

POUYA DANAT/ATLANTA BRAVES

'here' with this break on it, you have to impart that certain spin with certain angles to the ball. The better you're able to control your body, the more consistent you are."

It's no coincidence that command is Medlen's calling card.

"His ability to throw strikes is probably the biggest strength," said pitching coach Roger McDowell. "He throws strikes with all his pitches. He's got a fastball, curveball and changeup, and all of them are quality pitches at this level. He can throw them in any count."



Kenshin Kawakami, who stands 5-foot-11, has pitched some of the Braves' better games but has been haunted by a lack of run support.

POUYA DANAT/ATLANTA BRAVES

Medlen's command compensates for a low 90s fastball that doesn't come toward the plate with the same deceptive downward angle that a fastball from Derek Lowe or Tommy Hanson has. The steeper angle of their pitches makes them tough to hit with a level swing. Lowe and Hanson create even more deception by releasing the ball closer to the plate than Medlen, Wagner or Kawakami can.

Medlen, however, said too much is made of the angles and reach of taller pitchers. Kawakami agrees.

"To use a car as an analogy, cars that are smaller corner better and generally handle better on the road," said Kawakami. "I think a pitcher is the same way. A tall truck is much harder to control than a little sports car."

That explains command, but what about velocity? How can a 5-foot-10 pitcher like Wagner throw consistently in the high 90s?

Chipper Jones doesn't mind talking about Wagner these days. Not when he no longer has to face him.

"I've heard many approaches to Billy over the years," said Jones. "Try to swing an inch over the ball is one. I could never make myself do that. He threw so hard and seemed like he threw uphill that you tried to get on top of the ball."

Wagner is straight forward about his pitching approach.

"I'm no secret," he said. "When I come on the field, everyone is looking dead red. There's not one guy I've thought I couldn't throw the fastball to."

Wagner is straight forward about every-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





# AROUND BASEBALL

BY KEN ROSENTHAL

## PADRES' DEEP BULLPEN IMPRESSES FRANCOEUR

**THE METS' JEFF FRANCOEUR** on the Padres' bullpen: "That's the best bullpen I've seen in five years in the big leagues. Every guy they have is different. **Ryan Webb** throws 95 – and he's their mop-up guy. (**Edward**) **Mujica** has an unbelievable split, (**Luke**) **Gregerson** the frisbee slider. I was like, 'Where's the 87 mph guy throwing balls for you to crush?'"

Marlins leftfielder **Chris Coghlan**, the reigning NL Rookie of the Year, says he received all kinds of counsel during his two-month slump. The two people who made the greatest impression on him were Hall of Famer **Andre Dawson** and Padres second baseman **David Eckstein**. Dawson, a Marlins executive, told Coghlan, "One foot in front of the other." Eckstein asked Coghlan how he was doing during a meeting at second base. Coghlan said, "I'm grinding." Eckstein replied, in his usual dead-earnest manner, "Man that's the only way to play."

The Brewers' pitching is bad, and their fielding only makes matters worse. The team ranks near the bottom of the majors in defensive efficiency, and one scout describes the Brewers' catching, in the absence of the injured **Gregg Zaun**, as "the worst in the big leagues." Elsewhere, the scout says, third baseman **Casey McGehee** lacks range to his left, and centerfielder **Carlos Gomez** lacks instincts, while first baseman **Prince Fielder** has regressed defensively, and leftfielder **Ryan Braun** plays on the warning track and "never moves – like **Albert Belle** used to."

**Tim Wakefield's** knuckleball averages only 65.8 mph, according to the PitchFx data on [fangraphs.com](http://fangraphs.com). The Mets' **R.A. Dickey**, on the other hand, has increased his average velocity on the pitch from 70.6 to 72-75 mph over the past three seasons, and Mets catcher **Rod Barajas** says he occasionally will touch 81-82. Catching a knuckleball is difficult to begin with, and even more treacherous when the pitch is thrown harder.

The Diamondbacks' team ERA under manager **A.J. Hinch** and pitching coach **Mel Stottlemeyer Jr.**, neither of whom had prior major league experience, is nearly a full run per game higher than it was under former manager **Bob Melvin**, who managed from 2005 to May 2009. True, righthander **Brandon Webb** was healthy for nearly all of Melvin's tenure and unavailable to Hinch. But the D-Backs won in '07 with a largely undeveloped offense, in part because of the pitching expertise of Melvin and his former pitching coach, **Bryan Price**.

Reds GM **Walt Jocketty** acknowledges that the team eventually will need to back off rookie righthander **Mike Leake**, who jumped straight from college to the majors. The promotion of lefthander **Aroldis Chapman** and/or return of righthander **Edinson Volquez** from elbow surgery would enable the Reds to create breaks in Leake's schedule. Volquez could return by mid-July.

Cubs leftfielder **Alfonso Soriano**, in addition to reviving his own career, is serving as rookie shortstop **Starlin Castro's** host in Chicago. The two are living together and sharing meals in Soriano's three-bedroom apartment. "I want to show him the right way. I want to make him comfortable," Soriano said of Castro, who is 20. "If he's comfortable, he can help the team more."

- KEN ROSENTHAL IS A SENIOR WRITER FOR FOXSPORTS.COM

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

thing. He has no use for the physics behind his high-90s heat.

"The good lord blessed me with a good arm," he said. "Everything I do is pretty simple. There are not a lot of moving parts. I'm just short and quick to the plate."

McDowell, however, said Wagner's power comes from his legs. The closer uses a high leg kick to launch his long, forceful stride toward the plate.

"Billy is a strong guy with strong legs, and he uses those legs very well," said McDowell.

Both Medlen and Kawakami said they use their entire body to generate velocity. Medlen said he channels his power through his delivery, while Kawakami draws strength from his core and lower body.

"When you have guys who are 6-foot-10 like Randy Johnson and you have a guy like Billy and they both throw very similarly velocity-wise, it makes you wonder about height," said McDowell. "I'm not so sure it's the physical attributes that make the difference in how successful a pitcher is."

Brian McCann not only has faced pitchers of all shapes and sizes, he's also caught pitchers of all shapes and sizes.

"I'm used to catching so many different pitchers that it's not that big of a deal to me if a guy is under 6-feet," he said. "I still call a game based on his stuff and what his strengths are."

Jones doesn't think a pitcher's size makes much of a difference either.

"Finding a release point is the key to every pitcher," said Jones. "You've got to have that tunnel from wherever their release point is to where the contact point is. If the ball comes out of his hand in that tunnel, you swing. If it doesn't, you take. The size of the pitcher shouldn't matter."

It shouldn't, but occasionally it does in scouting circles. Wagner was a first-round pick of the Houston Astros back in 1993, but he is still peeved about the kiss-off he got from the Yankees before the draft.

"The Yankees told me if I wasn't 6-feet, they wouldn't even look at me," he recalled.

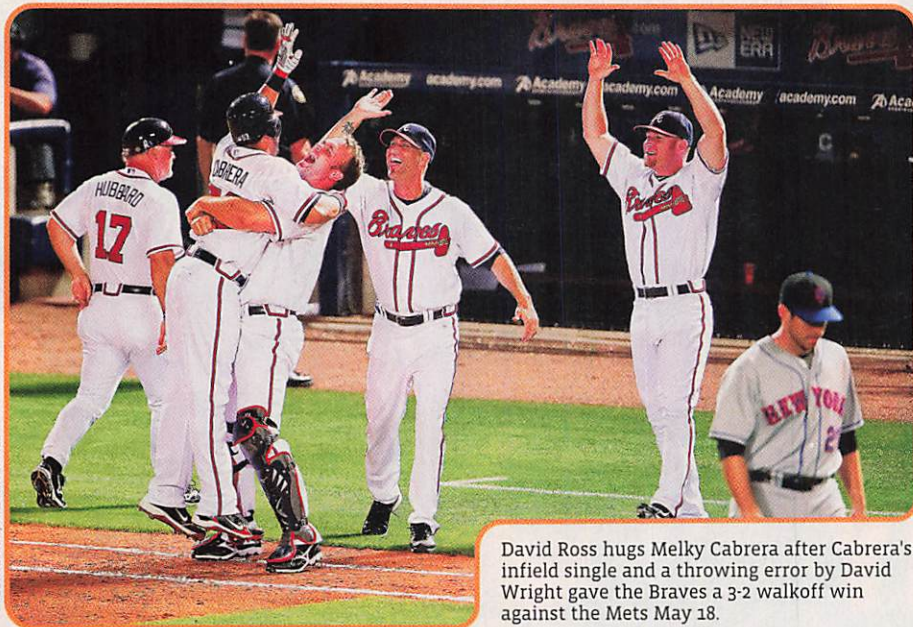
Medlen openly admits that he uses as motivation the feedback from scouts who were biased against him because of his size.

"You can give a 6-foot-6 guy who throws 95 a million bucks and give a guy like me \$50 grand to sign," said Medlen. "That doesn't mean he's going to make it and I won't. It's not about size. It's the arsenal and the drive to win. It has to do with your heart and mind as much as your stuff."



# BEHIND THE NUMBERS

## IT'S BETTER LATE THAN NEVER



David Ross hugs Melky Cabrera after Cabrera's infield single and a throwing error by David Wright gave the Braves a 3-2 walkoff win against the Mets May 18.

BY STEVE FALL

**WITH THIS YEAR'S BRAVES**, the game truly is never over until the final out. They have dominated opponents from the seventh inning on, setting the stage for some remarkable comebacks.

The Braves had out-scored the opposition 103-61 from the seventh inning on (through May 31). Their +42 late game run differential surpassed every other National League team. The Cardinals came next with a +26 figure, followed by the Padres (+20).

The Braves led the NL with six walk-off wins and they had 13 comeback victories. Only the Reds (17) and Dodgers (16) had more. Bobby Cox's club had also erased the major leagues' largest deficit, overcoming eight runs in a thrilling 10-9 victory over the Reds on May 20.

Atlanta's bats have come through when it counted. The team's 103 runs scored from the seventh inning on led the NL. The Reds and Brewers tied for the next highest figure with 94 apiece. Surprisingly, the Braves had just a .251 batting average in the seventh or later, which placed 10th in the league. But 87 walks allowed them to post the NL's best on-base percentage late in games (.358). They also had hit 17 homers, a figure topped by just three other teams.

The team has also excelled when it comes to preventing late scoring. The Braves tied Colorado for the third-fewest runs allowed (61) in the seventh inning or

later. That trailed only the Cardinals (57) and Padres (44). This demonstrates how the Braves' bullpen has succeeded despite tying for the NL's fewest saves (7) with Colorado.

Atlanta's performance through the first six innings - 145 runs scored and 142 allowed - was just average. Thus, there haven't been many save opportunities (11) with the club carrying few leads into the late innings. Considerable focus gets placed on how well relievers preserve leads, but the Braves' late-game success shows the importance of keeping the game close when trailing. The bullpen had the league's fourth-lowest relief ERA (3.50), which often gave the hitters a chance to pull off heroics.

The club had already won eight games when trailing after six innings. While that may not sound overly impressive, no other NL club had more than Cincinnati's six wins. The Braves only won eight games all last season when trailing after six innings, going 8-45 (.151). This year the club was 8-14 (.364).



Few starting pitchers have ever sustained success for as long as Tom Glavine, who will be inducted into the Braves Hall of Fame Aug. 6. His achievements stand out even more considering he pitched most of his career during a tremendous hitters' era.

When the Braves were at their best, so was Glavine. He averaged 17.4 wins from 1991 through 2002, despite two strike-shortened seasons. To put that into perspective, Atlanta has not had a single 17-game winner since 2003 (Russ Ortiz 21-7).

Glavine had a winning record and at least 13 victories every season from 1991 through 2002. That streak started with the Braves worst-to-first season and ran until the lefthander's final full season in Atlanta. Only two pitchers topped Glavine's run of 12 straight seasons at these levels. Teammate Greg Maddux had 17 from 1988 through 2004. He spent 11 of those years with the Braves (1993-2003). Hall of Famer Cy Young came next with 14 (1891-1904). Two more Hall of Fame pitchers matched Glavine with 12: Christy Mathewson (1903-14) and Bob Gibson (1961-72).

In three amazing seasons from 1991 through 1993, Glavine won 20 or more games. That feat has not been matched since. Among NL pitchers, Ferguson Jenkins last did this from 1970-72. In the AL, Dave Stewart won 20 four straight years for Oakland (1987-90).

During a time when many elite pitchers lost significant time with injuries, Glavine rarely missed a turn. From 1991 through 2002, he started 33 or more games 10 times. That included every season except strike-shortened 1994 and 1995. Maddux matched his achievement. But only two other pitchers managed as many as seven 33-start seasons in this timeframe (Randy Johnson and Kevin Brown).

Glavine excelled despite striking out relatively few hitters. Among the 33 pitchers to win 200 games since 1970, only five had a lower strikeouts per nine innings figure than Glavine (5.32) - Tommy John (3.88), Jerry Reuss (4.68), Dennis Martinez (4.84), Jim Palmer (4.86) and Rick Reuschel (5.11).

Glavine succeeded without dominating stuff by doing almost everything else well. He surrendered just .73 career home runs per nine innings, one of the best rates of his era. He twice worked over 200 innings in a season without throwing a single wild pitch. He committed his last career balk in 1994, and was still tough to steal against. At bat, Glavine joined Steve Carlton as the only pitchers to score and drive in at least 90 career runs since 1970. He was also the only pitcher in that period to draw at least 100 walks.



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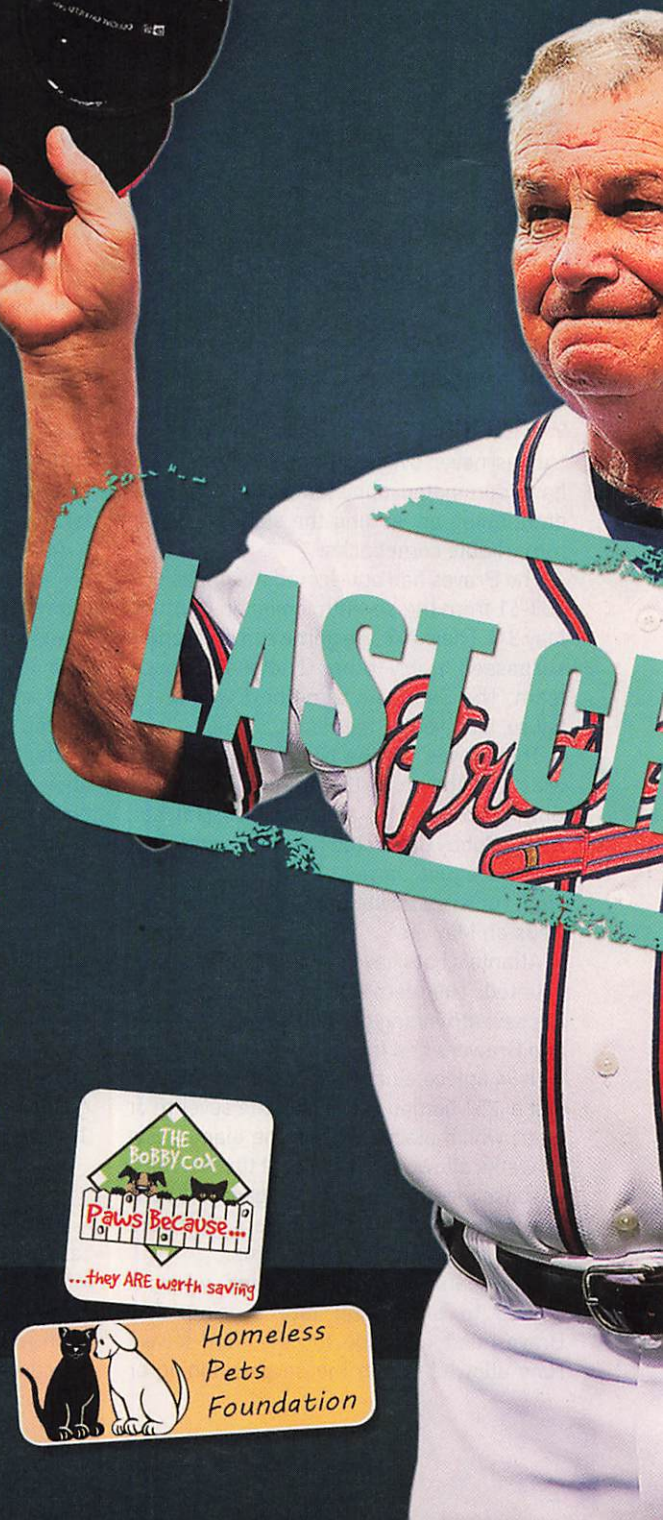
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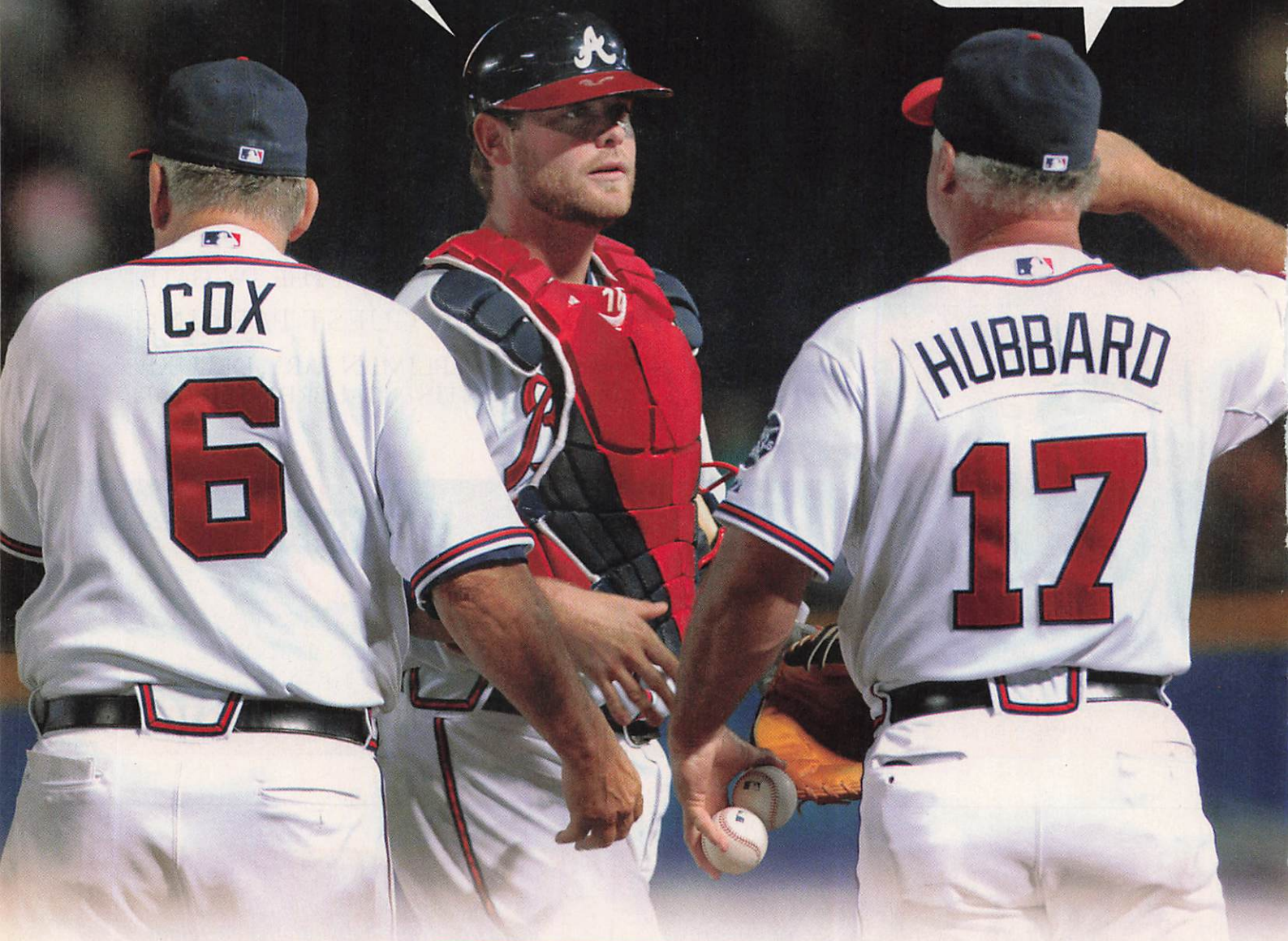


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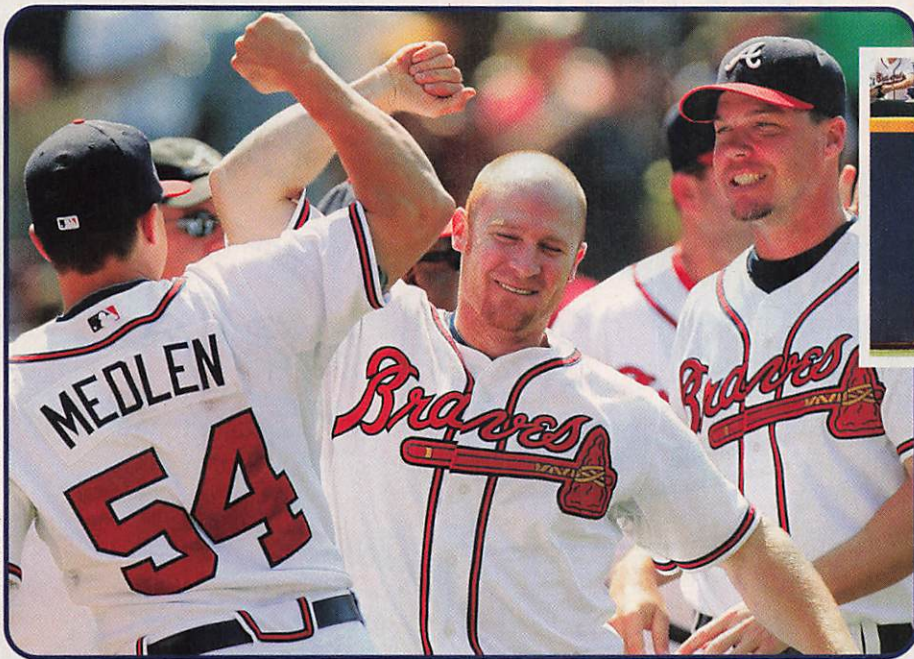
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# MR. CLUTCH

Brooks Conrad Receives MLB Award For Stunning Walk-Off Grand Slam



PHOTOS: KEVIN C. COV/GETTY IMAGES

BY MARK BOWMAN  
OF MLB.COM

**IT WAS AN IMPROBABLE WIN** decided by an unlikely hero in the grandest of manners. As Brooks Conrad looks ahead at his future, it's hard for him to imagine experiencing anything more energizing than what he achieved at Turner Field on May 20.

With the walk-off grand slam that he drilled off Reds closer Francisco Cordero during that afternoon's 10-9 Braves win, Conrad lived a dream shared by anybody who has ever stood in a batter's box, and was the key player in a dramatic seven-run, ninth-inning comeback that obviously caught the attention of the baseball world.

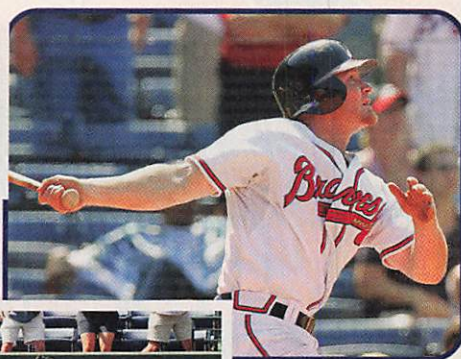
Conrad was voted Major League Baseball's Clutch Performer of the Month presented by Pepsi for the month of May. He received 43 percent of the votes, easily outdistancing Philadelphia's Roy Halladay, whose perfect game on May 29 helped him finish second with 19 percent of the vote. Others receiving votes included Minnesota's Justin Morneau (17 percent), Texas' Vladimir Guerrero (8 percent), Tampa Bay's and former Brave Rafael Soriano (6 percent), and Oakland's Dallas Braden (5 percent).

A 30-year-old journeyman who was never part of an Opening Day roster before this year, Conrad delivered just two hits in nine at-bats with runners in scoring position during the month. But as any Braves fan will certainly attest, his one-out grand slam defined "clutch."

"I wasn't really expecting [a grand slam] at that particular point, but I'll never doubt him again," said Chipper Jones, who Conrad replaced at third base during the top half of the ninth inning.

Conrad's only career walk-off homer looked like an opposite-field sacrifice fly that would have cut the Braves' deficit to three runs. But when it bounced out of Reds outfielder Laynce Nix's glove and fell over the left-field wall, the Atlanta players rushed the field to the surprise of Conrad, who had put his hands on his batting helmet and turned to make his way back to the dugout.

"I was rounding first, and from my angle, it looked like he brought it back," Conrad said, while reminiscing about the slam. "I put my hands on my helmet, like, 'No way he brought that back. At least we got the



The Man of the Hour - and the Month, as it turned out - Brooks Conrad bashes forearms with Kris Medlen after his grand slam swing (above) that produced a drive that narrowly missed being caught by Cincinnati's Laynce Nix (inset).

sac fly.' Then the fans went crazy, and they [Braves baserunners] kept running around the bases. So, I started sprinting to get to home plate as fast as I could. Talk about a change of emotion. Going from 'He caught it' to winning the game with a walk-off is pretty cool."

Down six runs, the Braves began the bottom of the ninth with four consecutive singles against Reds reliever Mike Lincoln. A walk and a Miguel Cairo error on Martin Prado's potential doubleplay grounder cut the deficit to three runs and brought Jason Heyward to the plate with the bases loaded.

Standing as the winning run, there was certainly reason to believe Heyward could deliver yet again. During the first six weeks of his career, the 20-year-old rightfielder had already produced two walk-off hits, the most recent coming less than 24 hours earlier.

But after Heyward struck out against left-handed reliever Arthur Rhodes to account for the first out, the stage was set for the switch-hitting Conrad, who forgot to change his batting helmet when the Reds called the right-handed Cordero out of the bullpen.

After changing to the correct helmet, Conrad completed a six-pitch at-bat against Cordero with the slam that completed one of the greatest comebacks in franchise history. The win marked just the second time that the Braves had won a game in which they trailed by six runs in the ninth inning or later.

"It was an exciting ballgame for one inning," Bobby Cox said. "Those first couple of innings, we were getting hammered. That's one reason you never give up."



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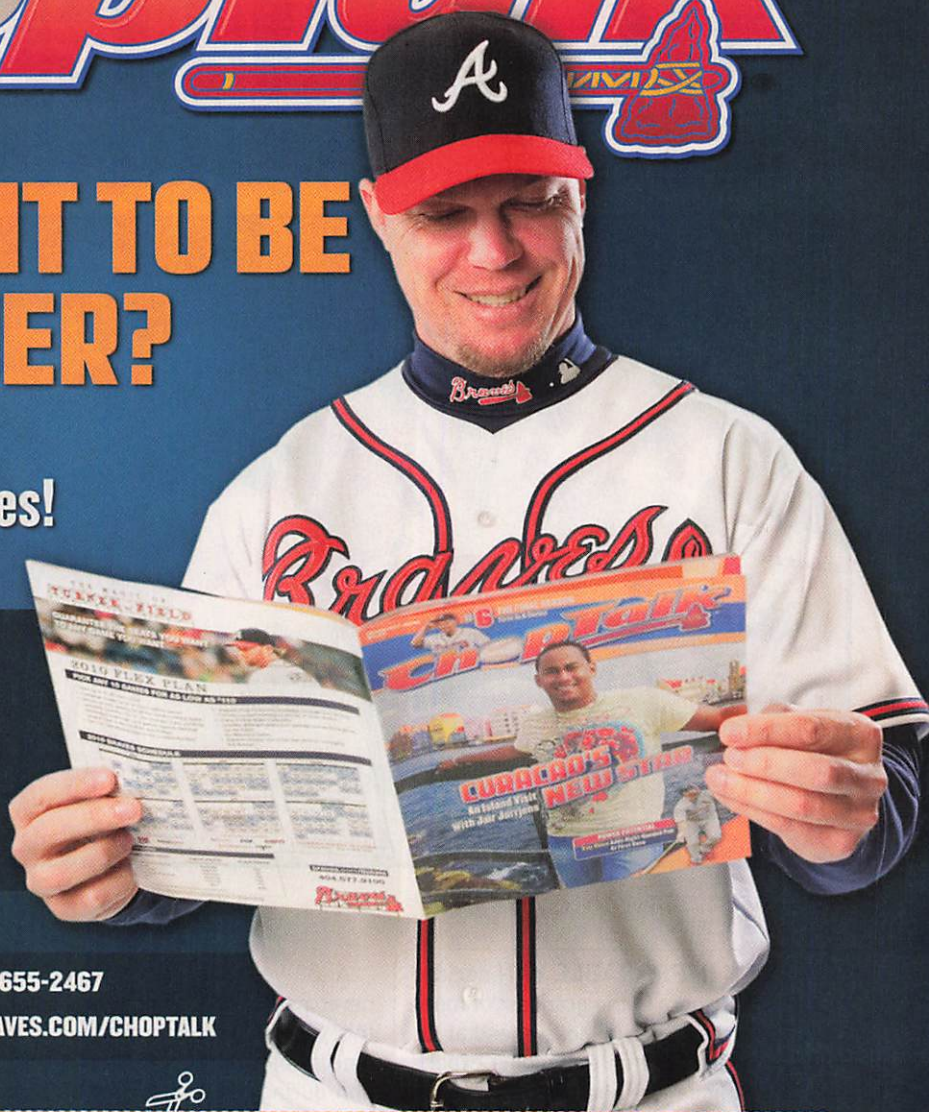
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PHOTOS: MCKINNEY HIGH SCHOOL



Matt Lipka (also below) was the 35th overall pick and brings speed, versatility and makeup to the organization as a shortstop and potential leadoff hitter.

# Head Of The Class

**Speedy, Athletic Shortstop Matt Lipka Has Atlanta-Area Roots And A High Ceiling**

BY BRIAN KNAPP

**M**att Lipka barely believed his ears when he heard the Atlanta Braves call his name with their first pick, 35th overall, in the Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft on June 7 in New York. The news turned his Frisco, Texas, home upside down, as tears flowed and a family rejoiced.

"When I heard my name called, it was bone-chilling," Lipka said. "My parents were crying. It was perfect for me. I got picked by Atlanta, my favorite team. It's always a dream growing up as a kid. You kind of get a taste for it when you go to all the all-star games, and you really start to realize how much you love the game."

An athletic 6-foot-1, 190-pound shortstop, Lipka was a two-sport standout – he played wide receiver for the football team – at McKinney High School in McKinney, Tex. He led the Lions to a 24-6 mark and their fourth consecutive district championship as a senior, batting .411 with 11 doubles, eight triples, 22 RBIs and a .588 on-base percentage. Rated by Baseball America as the third-fastest high school player in the draft, Lipka stole 15 bases without being caught.

The 18-year-old was taken as a "sand-

wich pick" – between rounds one and two – as compensation for Atlanta surrendering former closer Mike Gonzalez to free agency. The Braves also forfeited their first-round selection when they signed Billy Wagner away from the Red Sox.

Lipka's speed, personality and versatility – some foresee an eventual move to center field – made him a target for the Braves, according to Tony DeMacio, a long-time Braves scout who headed his first draft as director of scouting following his appointment when Roy Clark left for the Nationals.

"He's a leadoff-type hitter," DeMacio said. "We needed some speed in our organization. He's a 'plus' fielder, he has a 'plus' arm, and his makeup is off the charts. He's a winning-type player. Everybody in the room was on board. We discussed a lot of players, but his name kept coming to the top."

McKinney High School head baseball coach Jeremy Price thinks the Braves

plucked a winner from this year's talent pool.

"They are getting a bona fide athlete that's extremely versatile, and they're getting a young man who plays the game very hard," he said. "His knowledge of the game is as good as I've seen in a high school kid. He was almost like having another coach out there. You'd be hard-pressed to find a kid with the kind of intangibles he brings."

Paired with Zach Lee – a right-handed pitcher taken by the Dodgers with the 28th overall pick – Lipka helped Price and the Lions win 83 games over the last four seasons. He had a lasting impact on the program.

"He's a staple," Price said. "His contributions will be long-lived here, from what he's done for us in the win-loss column to what he's done for us off the field, in the clubhouse, and in the hallways of this school. The impression he's made on the young kids we have in our program – you can't put a price on that."

Lipka, a two-time prep All-American, played in the 2009 Aflac All-American Baseball Classic in 2009. As a junior, he hit .380 with nine home runs and 28 RBIs. He signed a national letter of intent to play for the University of Alabama in November, but quickly signed with the Braves and was assigned to the rookie Gulf Coast League.

"Knowing the guys at Alabama, it's tough, because I did develop such a good relationship with them," Lipka said.

"They already called and told me, 'We want what's best for you and the family.' They haven't been on our backs about this. I'll be wearing a different 'A'. It's just impossible to turn down the opportunity."

Lipka understands he faces an uphill climb in his transition to professional baseball.

"Obviously, I'm going to be playing against the best," he said. "The game's going to be

a little faster. I think I'm ready for that."

Though some scouts question Lipka's long-term viability as a shortstop, DeMacio wants to give him a crack at the position.

"Our guys liked him," DeMacio said. "When I saw him, he did everything you want to see a middle infielder do. We're going to try him there first, but we don't feel like he'd have any problem at all adjusting to center field."

Lipka, who spent much of his childhood in Snellville, Ga., has a brother and sister who still reside in the Atlanta area.







The Braves selected two college third basemen - Todd Cunningham (L) and Joe Leonard - with two of their first four picks.

# New Recruits

Trend In Tony DeMacio's First Group  
Leans More Toward Hitting Than Pitching

BY BRIAN KNAPP

**A**nd on the third day, Braves scouting director Tony DeMacio paused to wipe his figurative brow - if only for a moment.

Months of planning, information gathering, and scouting came to a head June 7-9, when the Atlanta Braves selected 51 players in the 2010 Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft. What began with Matt Lipka and the 35th overall selection on day one ended some 40 hours later when the Braves chose Cody Gabella, a shortstop out of Burlington Notre Dame High School in Iowa, in the 50th round.

"Our goal is to try and draft the best players possible for the organization," said DeMacio, who headed his first draft after replacing Roy Clark last year. "I feel fine about it. I thought the draft went well and felt like we got our fair share."

Of the 51 players selected by Atlanta, 30 of them were position players. It represents a departure from recent drafts in which the organization tilted heavily towards pitching. In 2010, only seven of the team's first 24 picks were pitchers.

"With the excess pitching in the draft," DeMacio said, "we felt like we could get a

few pitchers further down, so we concentrated a little more on the position players."

The Braves set the tone by drafting Lipka in the compensation round. A dynamic shortstop out of McKinney High School in Texas, he hit better than .400 and stole 15 bases as a senior. Some view the 18-year-old as an eventual outfielder. He signed and will report to the rookie Gulf Coast League club.

"Matt is a tremendous athlete who can really run," DeMacio said. "He has great makeup, he is a leader, and he is a winner. We project him as a shortstop. However, he has the talent to play a number of positions, including the outfield and third base."

With Chipper Jones nearing the end of his accomplished career, Atlanta drafted a pair of third basemen inside its first four picks - Jacksonville State University's Todd Cunningham, with the 53rd overall selection in round two, and the University of Pittsburgh's Joe Leonard, with the 101st overall selection in the second round.

Cunningham, a switch-hitter, led Jacksonville State to an Ohio Valley Conference championship and a spot in the NCAA Regionals this year, as he batted .359

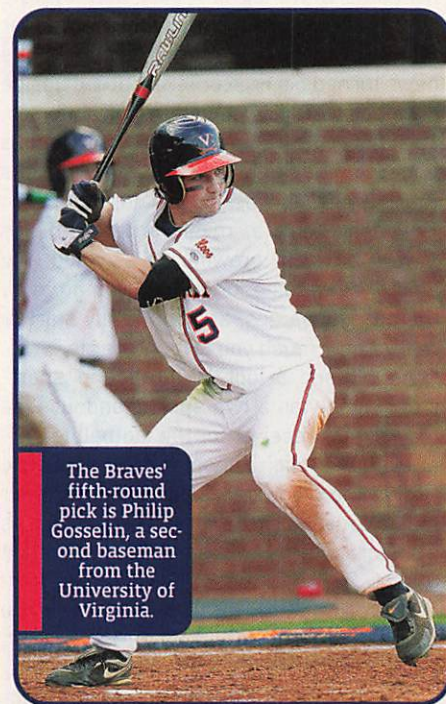
with 11 home runs, 43 RBIs and 21 steals. Thirty-two of his 85 hits went for extra bases. More importantly, he won the Cape Cod League batting title (.387) last summer and led the league, which utilizes wooden bats, in hits (59) and on-base percentage (.458). No other batter hit better than .357.

"I think we got a professional hitter," DeMacio said. "He's always hit. I hope that hitting continues in the minor leagues. We were happy he was still available. You can't take anything away from the kid because he wasn't taken before us. Different teams have different constraints. We were happy he was there."

In Leonard, the Braves landed a 6-foot-5, 220-pound infielder who profiles as a middle-of-the-order run producer. This year's Big East Player of the Year, he hit .433 with eight home runs and set school records for hits (104), RBIs (71) and doubles (23). A semifinalist for the Dick Howser Trophy, college baseball's equivalent to football's Heisman Trophy, Leonard was Pittsburgh's highest draft choice in a quarter century. His father, John, was picked by the Orioles in 1982 but never reached the major leagues.

"He's a prototypical corner guy," DeMacio said. "We're hoping player development can keep developing him further. He's young - he's only 20."

Sandwiched between the Cunningham and Leonard selections was Andrelton Simmons, a shortstop who also has a mid-90s fastball that might necessitate a move to full-time pitching. Rated by Baseball



The Braves' fifth-round pick is Philip Gosselin, a second baseman from the University of Virginia.



| ROUND  | PICK | NAME                       | POSITION | SCHOOL                                     |
|--------|------|----------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------|
| Comp A | 35   | <b>Matt Lipka</b>          | SS       | McKinney High School (Tex.)                |
| 2      | 53   | <b>Todd Cunningham</b>     | 3B       | Jacksonville State University (Ala.)       |
| 2      | 70   | <b>Andrelton Simmons</b>   | SS       | Western Oklahoma State College             |
| 3      | 101  | <b>Joe Leonard</b>         | 3B       | University of Pittsburgh                   |
| 4      | 134  | <b>David Filak</b>         | RHP      | State University of New York at Oneonta    |
| 5      | 164  | <b>Philip Gosselin</b>     | 2B       | University of Virginia                     |
| 6      | 194  | <b>Joseph Terdoslavich</b> | 3B       | California State University - Long Beach   |
| 7      | 224  | <b>Matthew Suschak</b>     | RHP      | University of Toledo (Ohio)                |
| 8      | 254  | <b>Kurt Fleming</b>        | OF       | St. Christopher's School (Virginia)        |
| 9      | 284  | <b>David Rohm</b>          | 1B       | Fresno (Calif.) Community College          |
| 10     | 314  | <b>Matthew Lewis</b>       | RHP      | University of California - Davis           |
| 11     | 344  | <b>Chasen Shreve</b>       | LHP      | College of Southern Nevada                 |
| 12     | 374  | <b>Barrett Kleinknecht</b> | SS       | Francis Marion University (S.C.)           |
| 13     | 404  | <b>Brandon Drury</b>       | SS       | Grants Pass High School (Oregon)           |
| 14     | 434  | <b>Richie Tate</b>         | RHP      | Marked Tree High School (Arkansas)         |
| 15     | 464  | <b>Corey Brownsten</b>     | C        | University of Pittsburgh                   |
| 16     | 494  | <b>Dan Winnie</b>          | RHP      | Lackawanna (Pa.) College                   |
| 17     | 524  | <b>Stefan Sabol</b>        | C        | Aliso Niguel High School (California)      |
| 18     | 554  | <b>Zachary Alvord</b>      | 2B       | South Forsyth High School (Georgia)        |
| 19     | 584  | <b>Tyler Hess</b>          | RHP      | Sonoma State University (Calif.)           |
| 20     | 614  | <b>Jason Mowry</b>         | OF       | St. Petersburg (Fla.) Junior College       |
| 21     | 644  | <b>William Beckwith</b>    | 1B       | George C. Wallace Community College (Ala.) |
| 22     | 674  | <b>Jordan Buckley</b>      | OF       | New Mexico Junior College                  |
| 23     | 704  | <b>Evan Gattis</b>         | C        | University of Texas of the Permian Basin   |
| 24     | 734  | <b>Evan Danieli</b>        | RHP      | University of Notre Dame                   |
| 25     | 764  | <b>Dan Jurik</b>           | RHP      | St. John Fisher College (N.Y.)             |
| 26     | 794  | <b>Jonathan Burns</b>      | RHP      | St. Edwards University (Tex.)              |
| 27     | 824  | <b>William Kempf</b>       | RHP      | Baylor University                          |
| 28     | 854  | <b>Kyle Mertins</b>        | RHP      | Cal-State Fullerton                        |
| 29     | 884  | <b>Reid Roper</b>          | SS       | Harrisburg High School (Illinois)          |
| 30     | 914  | <b>Kenny Fleming</b>       | OF       | Shelton State Community College (Ala.)     |
| 31     | 944  | <b>Jack Reinheimer</b>     | SS       | Ardrey Kell High School (North Carolina)   |
| 32     | 974  | <b>Ryan Delgado</b>        | C        | Azusa Pacific University (Calif.)          |
| 33     | 1004 | <b>Albert Minnis</b>       | LHP      | Lawrence High School (Kansas)              |
| 34     | 1034 | <b>Matt Fouch</b>          | LHP      | United States Military Academy             |
| 35     | 1064 | <b>Kenny Swab</b>          | C        | University of Virginia                     |
| 36     | 1094 | <b>Jarred Frierson</b>     | OF       | University of Nevada Las Vegas             |
| 37     | 1124 | <b>Kollin Dowdy</b>        | OF       | Harrisburg High School (Illinois)          |
| 38     | 1154 | <b>Jake Wark</b>           | 1B       | Jesuit High School (Oregon)                |
| 39     | 1184 | <b>Stephen Foster</b>      | LHP      | Lewis and Clark State College (Ore.)       |
| 40     | 1214 | <b>Ian Marshall</b>        | RHP      | University of Richmond (Va.)               |
| 41     | 1244 | <b>Spencer Jordan</b>      | RHP      | Florence-Darlington Tech (S.C.)            |
| 42     | 1274 | <b>Ben Waldrip</b>         | 1B       | Cypress College (Calif.)                   |
| 43     | 1304 | <b>Le Jon Baker</b>        | OF       | Crenshaw High School (California)          |
| 44     | 1334 | <b>Ryan Morrow</b>         | C        | St. Mary's University (Tex.)               |
| 45     | 1364 | <b>Joe Lucas</b>           | SS       | Dakota County Technical College (Minn.)    |
| 46     | 1394 | <b>Kendall Logan</b>       | OF       | Copiah-Lincoln Community College (Miss.)   |
| 47     | 1424 | <b>Francois Lafreniere</b> | RHP      | St. Petersburg (Fla.) Junior College       |
| 48     | 1454 | <b>James Mahler</b>        | RHP      | Salt Lake Community College                |
| 49     | 1484 | <b>Ryan Turner</b>         | RHP      | McLennan (Tex.) Community College          |
| 50     | 1514 | <b>Cody Gabella</b>        | SS       | Burlington Notre Dame High School (Iowa)   |



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT ONEONTA

Righthander David Filak, the Braves' fourth-round pick, had 104 strikeouts in 67 1/3 innings at Oneonta State and limited hitters to a .171 average.

America as the best defensive shortstop in the draft, the Curacao native (Jair Jurrjens, Andruw Jones) helped guide Western Oklahoma State College to 57 wins, a conference championship and a No. 3 ranking nationally. Simmons, a 6-foot-2, 170-pound righthander struck out 31 of the 76 men he faced on the mound.

"I think he can [start or relieve]," DeMacio said. "He's also an outstanding shortstop. I can see him both ways. We'll see what direction he goes."

David Filak, an NCAA Div. III All-American out of the State University of New York at Oneonta, rounded out Atlanta's top five selections. Taken in the fourth round (134th overall), the 6-foot-4 righthander went 8-1 with a 2.00 ERA and 104 strikeouts in 67 and 1/3 innings, holding opposing hitters to a .171 batting average. Filak averaged 14 strikeouts per nine innings as a collegian.

The Braves called a familiar name in round 48, when they selected James Mahler - the son of Mickey Mahler (LHP, 1977-79) and nephew of the late Rick Mahler (RHP, 1979-88, '91), both of whom pitched for Atlanta. The 21-year-old Mahler, a righthander, stands 6-foot-6 and went 5-3 with a 3.91 ERA in 12 appearances for Salt Lake Community College.



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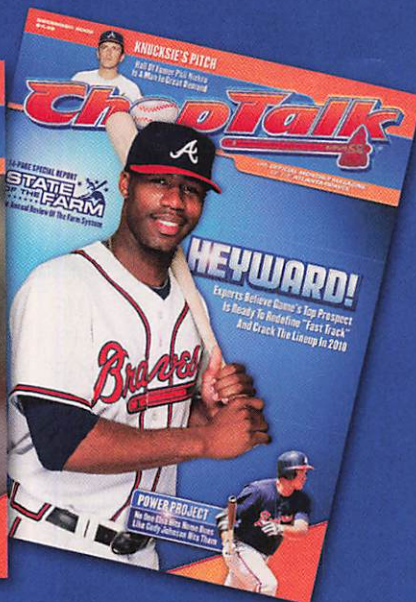
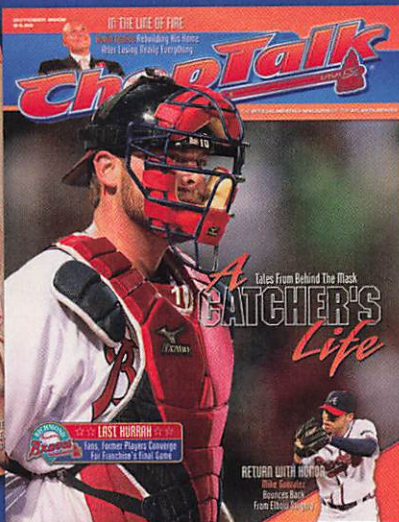
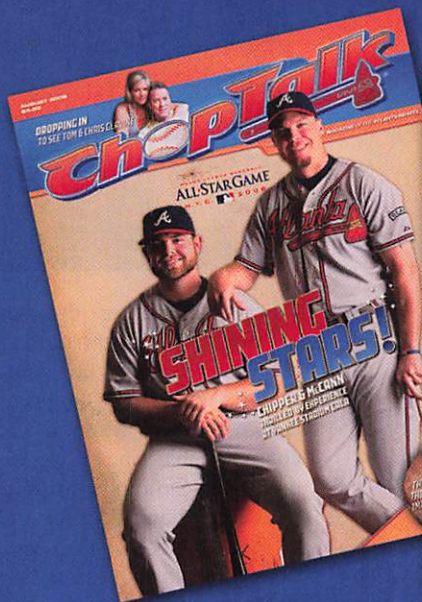


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| June 2005      | Tim Hudson              |
| July 2005      | Kyle Davies             |
| August 2005    | Johnson & Langerhans    |
| September 2005 | Jeff Francoeur          |
| October 2005   | Andruw Jones            |
| November 2005  | Brian McCann            |
| December 2005  | Andruw Jones            |
| January 2006   | Edgar Renteria          |
| February 2006  | Nieko, Aaron, Lemaster  |
| March 2006     | LaRoche Family          |
| April 2006     | Andruw, Smoltz, Chipper |
| May 2006       | Chris Reitsma           |
| June 2006      | Francoeur's Slam        |
| July 2006      | Edgar Renteria          |
| August 2006    | Brian McCann            |
| September 2006 | Bob Wickman             |
| October 2006   | John Smoltz             |
| November 2006  | Bobby Cox               |
| December 2006  | Jeff Francoeur          |

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| February 2007  | Spring Training              |
| March 2007     | Mike Gonzalez                |
| April 2007     | Andruw Jones (Sold Out)      |
| May 2007       | Hubbard & Johnson (Sold Out) |
| June 2007      | John Smoltz                  |
| July 2007      | Diaz & Harris                |
| August 2007    | Edgar Renteria               |
| September 2007 | Mark Teixeira                |
| October 2007   | Jeff Francoeur               |
| November 2007  | Chipper Jones                |
| December 2007  | John Smoltz                  |
| January 2008   | Tom Glavine                  |
| February 2008  | Tim Hudson                   |
| March 2008     | Mark Kotsay                  |
| April 2008     | Teixeira & Jones             |
| May 2008       | Brian McCann                 |
| June 2008      | Jair Jurrjens                |
| July 2008      | Chipper Jones                |
| August 2008    | McCann & Jones               |
| September 2008 | Skip Caray                   |

|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
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| November 2008  | Chipper Jones             |
| December 2008  | Pete Van Wieren           |
| January 2009   | Frank Wren                |
| February 2009  | Hank Aaron                |
| March 2009     | Derek Lowe                |
| April 2009     | Vazquez, Lowe & Kawakami  |
| May 2009       | Bobby Cox & Chipper Jones |
| June 2009      | Jeff Francoeur            |
| July 2009      | Nate McLouth              |
| August 2009    | Tommy Hanson              |
| September 2009 | Martin Prado              |
| October 2009   | Yunel Escobar             |
| November 2009  | Peter Moylan              |
| December 2009  | Jason Heyward             |
| January 2010   | Billy Wagner              |
| February 2010  | Jair Jurrjens             |
| March 2010     | Derek Lowe                |
| April 2010     | Bobby Cox                 |
| May 2010       | Jason Heyward             |
| June 2010      | Martin Prado              |





## MYRTLE BEACH STARTING ROTATION HAS "BIG LEAGUE" WRITTEN ON IT

**PITCHING MIGHT NOT GROW ON TREES...** but it certainly is blossoming in the Atlanta farm system, particularly at advanced Class A Myrtle Beach.

On June 10, the Braves promoted righthander Arodys Vizcaino to Myrtle Beach from Class A Rome. He joined former Rome teammate Julio Teheran, who moved up to the Carolina League on May 15, and fellow righthanders Randall Delgado and J.J. Hoover, both of whom opened the season with the Pelicans. The quartet gives manager Rocket Wheeler four of the top pitching prospects not only in the Atlanta farm system, but the entire minor leagues.

"We realized heading into this season that all of these young men had very good arms with lots of projection," said Kurt Kemp, the Braves' director of player development. "They all had three quality pitches that they throw for strikes, and if they threw the ball the way they are capable of, we believed they had the ability to advance. What they've been able to do thus far is remarkable. We knew they had the ability to do it, but by no means were we expecting it."

Acquired from the Yankees over the off-season in the deal that also brought Melky Cabrera and Mike Dunn to the Braves and sent Javier Vazquez to New York, Vizcaino overwhelmed the South Atlantic League during his final month at Rome. The 19-year-old led the league in wins with a 9-3 record and ranked 10th with a 2.34 ERA, along with 66 strikeouts and only nine walks in 69 innings. He did not allow a base on balls in his last 40 innings and did not give up an earned run after May 13, a streak that reached 33 2/3 innings.

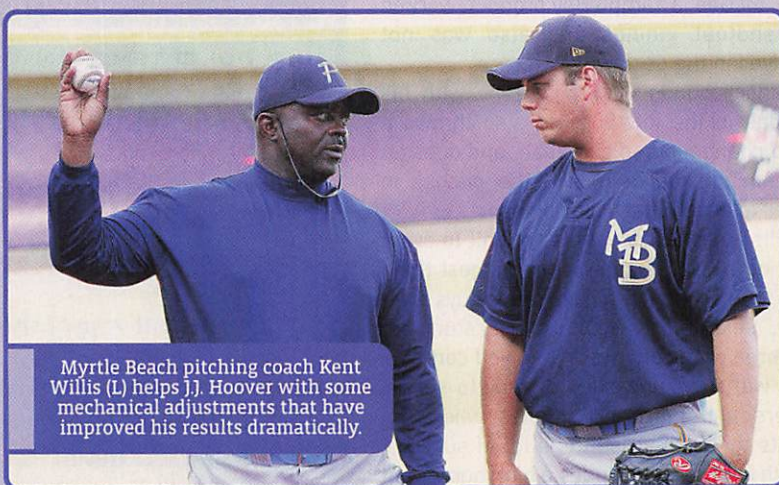
Vizcaino dominated hitters with his mid-to-upper 90s fastball and a tight breaking ball. Three days prior to his promotion to Myrtle Beach, the righthander was named the starting pitcher for the Southern Division in the SAL All-Star Game.

"Arodys was so-so during his first few starts at Rome," Kemp said. "Around the first of May, he started to feel more comfortable with everything and made a few minor adjustments. I believe once he got into a comfort zone, he started to take off and really made some rapid strides."

Teheran, who signed with the Braves out of Colombia in 2007, struck out 12 batters in his Carolina League debut on May 19 before tying the Myrtle Beach franchise record with 14 strikeouts two outings later against Winston-Salem. In his first five starts for the Pelicans, Teheran posted a 2-1 record and a 1.69 ERA, showing excellent command of his mid-90s fastball while mixing in an outstanding changeup and a power curveball. Add his aggressiveness and tenacity for exposing a hitter's weakness, and Teheran has the makings of a total package.

"It's rare to find a 19-year-old with his composure and ability," said Wheeler. "He'll throw any of his three pitches at any time in the count. Right now, he just needs experience and innings."

Despite Delgado's 2-5 record through his first 13 outings, a result of receiving an average of only two runs of support per game, he has been the Pelicans' most consistent starter this year. The righthander from Panama, who struck out a career-best 12 in a 1-0 loss to Lynchburg on May 25, led the league with 87 strikeouts, 78 innings pitched, an opponents' batting average of .211 and a 0.97 WHIP (walks plus hits per inning), and ranked



Myrtle Beach pitching coach Kent Willis (L) helps J.J. Hoover with some mechanical adjustments that have improved his results dramatically.

third in the Carolina League with a 2.42 ERA through June 10. His strikeout total was fourth in the minor leagues.

Hoover stumbled early but has dominated since making some mechanical adjustments prior to his start on May 7. The righthander worked with pitching coach Kent Willis on altering his hand placement while getting set on the mound and staying in line with home plate during his delivery. By making those alterations, he cut his ERA to 3.18 from 6.35 over his next six outings while surrendering only four earned runs in 39 2/3 innings. During the stretch, he went 4-1 with a 0.92 ERA, including a start in which he worked eight shutout innings in an eventual 9-1 win over Wilmington on June 1.

The righthander throws a fastball with excellent movement that reaches as high as 94 mph. Scouts rate Hoover's curveball as an above-average pitch, and his changeup is solid and improving.

"I'm more comfortable now and I'm throwing the ball the way I did last year at Rome," Hoover said. "I didn't make any major changes, but I feel like everything is in sync. It definitely feels good to be back in rhythm on the mound."



## STRIKEOUT STORY

Mike Minor, the Braves' No. 1 draft pick a year ago, had only one win through June 10, but that doesn't tell the story of the progress the seventh overall pick in 2009 is making this season at Mississippi.

The lefthander out of Vanderbilt overcame some early inconsistency with his command to dominate the Double-A Southern League. He has led the league in strikeouts throughout the season, and had 93 in his first 70 innings. Minor trailed only Charles Furbush, a Detroit farmhand at the advanced A level, among all minor leaguers in strikeouts.

On June 3, two of the minors' premier pitching prospects went head-to-head when Minor faced Jake McGee of Montgomery. Minor struck out 11 in eight scoreless innings while receiving a no-decision. McGee, a Tampa Bay product, worked six shutout innings and also was not involved in the decision.

Minor pounds the strike zone with his fastball in the low 90s. He also throws a solid changeup and curveball, and does an outstanding job of mixing the pitches in order to keep hitters off-balance.

"His ability to locate his fastball to every part of the strike zone is the biggest thing that's separating him from other guys right now," said Kemp. "He has quality stuff with all three of his pitches. When you combine that with his knowledge of how to set up hitters and place his pitches where he wants them, the result is a lot of success, which in his case includes a high number of strikeouts."



**GWINNETT**  
TRIPLE A

**FIRST BASEMAN Freddie Freeman** missed a week with a right knee strain prior to returning to the lineup June 5. Freeman struggled with minor injuries last season and has battled through a few more this year. As a result, he opened June with only three hits in his first 20 at-bats. Freeman also was hitting only .205 against left-handed pitchers through June 10...

**Jose Ortegano** has made the most of a rare promotion from Myrtle Beach - skipping Double A - on May 15. The lefthander from Venezuela went 2-0 in his first three starts with Gwinnett, allowing only four earned runs in 17 1/3 innings...

The Braves have shifted **Ryne Reynoso** from the rotation to a relief role. The righthander opened the season by making seven starts and losing five straight deci-

sions at Gwinnett before being sent to Mississippi on May 15 to make the transition to the bullpen. After putting together four strong outings with the M-Braves, he rejoined Gwinnett on June 8 and struck out two without allowing a hit in one inning of work that night...

**Mike Dunn** took over the closer duties when **Craig Kimbrel** was promoted to Atlanta. Dunn allowed only two earned runs in his first 26 2/3 innings and was successful on his first four save opportunities. He also struck out 36 for a 12.15 strikeouts per nine innings ratio, second in the International League...

### PROSPECTS BY POSITION

|            |                                                      |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RHP</b> | <b>JULIO TEHERAN</b><br>Age 19, Myrtle Beach         |
| <b>LHP</b> | <b>MIKE MINOR</b><br>22, Mississippi                 |
| <b>REL</b> | <b>STEPHEN MAREK</b><br>26, Gwinnett                 |
| <b>C</b>   | <b>CHRISTIAN BETHANCOURT</b><br>18, Rome             |
| <b>1B</b>  | <b>FREDDIE FREEMAN</b><br>20, Gwinnett               |
| <b>2B</b>  | <b>MATT WEAVER</b><br>20, Rome                       |
| <b>3B</b>  | <b>SAMUEL SIME</b><br>23, Myrtle Beach               |
| <b>SS</b>  | <b>EDWARD SALCEDO</b><br>18, Dominican Summer League |
| <b>LF</b>  | <b>ROBERT HEFFLINGER</b><br>20, Rome                 |
| <b>CF</b>  | <b>HECTOR GARCIA</b><br>18, Dominican Summer League  |
| <b>RF</b>  | <b>CORY HARRILCHAK</b><br>22, Myrtle Beach           |

Three G-Braves have recorded the 100th double of their careers in recent weeks. Outfielder **Matt Young** began the trend on April 23, followed by fellow outfielder **Jordan Schafer** on May 29. First baseman **Barbaro Canizares** joined them on June 6...

Outfielder **Alex Romero** made a positive initial impression when he hit a home run for the G-Braves in his first at-bat at Coolray Field, on May 31. Romero was promoted to Gwinnett from Mississippi on May 25...

**Wes Timmons** continues to produce as

consistently as any Brave in the farm system while serving as Gwinnett's No. 2 hitter. The veteran third baseman was hitting .375 with runners in scoring position, including .500 (10-for-20) with 12 RBIs with RISP and two outs...

**James Parr** underwent reconstructive elbow surgery in early June and will be sidelined until at least the middle of next season. The righthander was placed on the disabled list May 22 after posting a 2-5 record with a 5.16 ERA in nine starts this season at Gwinnett.

**Chris Resop** was the team's best pitcher during the first two months of the season. The 27-year-old pitched a one-hitter June 10 but had a clause in his contract that if he was not on the major league roster by June 15, he could tell the Braves to notify every major league club of his availability. If another team was willing to place him on its 25-man roster, Resop was a free agent. A reliever prior to becoming a starter last year, Resop was named the International League Pitcher of the Week for May 10-16...

The G-Braves lost a 15-inning game, 8-7, on May 17 in a game that took a Gwinnett-record four hours and 52 minutes. Gwinnett scored four runs in the bottom of the ninth to tie the game, 7-7.



**MISSISSIPPI**  
DOUBLE A

**ERIC DUNCAN**, a former first-round draft pick of the Yankees who signed with the Braves as a six-year free agent over the winter, has been Mississippi's most consistent hitter. Duncan was ablaze in late May when he had consecutive three-hit games on May 23-24 before going 5-for-5 with two RBIs versus Montgomery on Memorial Day. Originally a third baseman who moved to first base midway through his Yankees tenure, Duncan is playing second base for the first time in his career and also seeing activity in the outfield. "He's done a great job, no matter where we've put him," said manager Phillip Wellman. "He's carried our offense so far..."

Lefthander **Scott Diamond** likes pitching at Trustmark Park. Diamond was 2-1 with a 2.91 ERA in his first seven starts at home compared to 0-4, 6.75 in his initial five outings on the road. His best showing thus far came on May 18 when he struck out 10 West Tenn batters over eight innings while allowing only five hits and one run. Diamond has incorporated a changeup to





BENINO PRUNEDA

his repertoire this season to go with his plus command of a fastball and a dependable curveball...

**Mauro Gomez** was named the Southern League Hitter of the Week for May 10-16. Gomez was recognized for hitting a grand slam on May 14, one day before he went 4-for-5 with two RBIs. The first baseman drove in 11 runs during the week. Through June 10, he ranked fifth in the league with 16 doubles and led the M-Braves with 34 RBIs...

The M-Braves received outfielder **Michael Daniel** from Myrtle Beach on May 25. Daniel opened the season with Double-A Harrisburg prior to being released and signing with the Braves in early May. Second baseman **Travis Jones** was sent to the Pelicans, and catcher **Benji Johnson** was released on the same day. Pitcher **Jon Huber** also was released...

Mississippi received outfielder **Antoan Richardson** on May 26 after the Braves bought the contract of the former San Francisco Giants' first-round draft pick from the Schaumburg Flyers of the independent Northern League.



**MYRTLE BEACH**  
ADVANCED A

**THE PELICANS** hosted the Carolina League-California All-Star Game for the second time in three years. **Rocket Wheeler** managed the Carolina League squad for the third consecutive season. He was joined by hitting coach **Rick Albert**, pitching coach **Kent Willis**, and trainer **Chas Miller**, as well as pitchers **Randall Delgado**, **J.J. Hoover** and **Julio Teheran**...

The Pelicans received 33-year-old **Scott Proctor**, who is recovering from elbow surgery, during the first week of June. Proctor opened the season at Gwinnett but was not effective and wound up going to extended spring training to continue his recovery. Since he is not on the Atlanta 40-man roster, Proctor is not considered to be on a rehabilitation assignment and counts against the Myrtle Beach 25-man limit...

Reliever **Benino Pruneda** earned a promotion to Mississippi on June 10 after compiling a 2.79 ERA and averaging 12.7 strikeouts per nine innings, good for second in the Carolina League. The hard-throwing righthander did not allow an earned run in his last seven outings with Myrtle Beach while succeeding on four of his last five save opportunities. Pruneda struck out the

## I DIDN'T THINK I'D BE PICKED AS A PITCHER

**IT'S GREAT TO BE PROMOTED** to Mississippi. I was hoping not to go back to Myrtle Beach (out of spring training), but I realize all I can do is to keep pitching. I pitched well while I was there, and I'm feeling great now.

My development has been going well every year I've been in the minor leagues. I've been working on my curveball and my slider and trusting my fastball. I feel like I'm coming along pretty well.

Trusting my fastball has been the biggest key for me. I've been focusing on keeping it down in the zone and then elevating it when I want. Changing the hitters' eye level is the big thing. If they keep looking down and then I throw my fastball high, it can really help me become more effective.

(Myrtle Beach pitching coach) Kent Willis kept emphasizing the need for me to work off my fastball, and I feel like I made a lot of progress with that this season.

I know it's not typical to see a guy like me at 5-foot-9 throwing in the mid-90s. There's been a couple of players from other teams that have come up to me and said, "You have a live fastball. It really gets in there pretty quick." It feels good to hear that from hitters and gives me a lot of confidence.

I always had a decent arm, although it's never been as good as it is now. When I was in Little League and Pony League, I threw pretty hard, although most of the time I played shortstop and third base.

I didn't throw as hard in high school because I had tendinitis in my rotator cuff. I wound up not pitching that much, and it wasn't until I started to pitch again in junior college that I really began to develop arm strength.

I went to San Jacinto Junior College as an infielder, but they stuck me in the bullpen because I wasn't getting any playing time with all of the draft-and-follow picks playing in front of me.

I wound up pitching in the JUCO World Series in Grand Junction, Colorado. During that time, several scouts saw me, and the Braves drafted me (2007).

The way everything happened was really a shock. I remember getting a call during the draft, telling me I had been drafted by the Braves in the 31st round as a pitcher. My only reaction was, "Wow!"

I never thought I'd get drafted as a pitcher, but whatever it takes to get a shot was fine with me. It allowed me to get that much closer to my dream. I'd wanted to play major league baseball ever since I was a little kid.

Having a good first year at Rome (2008) allowed me to relax a little bit, to calm down. It helped me realize it's the same thing I had always done. The only difference is you're a professional.

Driving to Mississippi from Myrtle Beach, I was definitely excited. I called my parents and they were happy for me. Otherwise I just thought about what I need to do to continue having success.

I've talked to a lot of big leaguers, and everyone says the same thing, which is to stay with my approach and my strengths.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

A hard-throwing righthander from San Jacinto (Tex.) Junior College, Benino Pruneda received a promotion to Double-A Mississippi from advanced A Myrtle Beach just before this issue went to press. He emerged as a steady reliever at Rome in 2008 by posting a 2.83 ERA in 41 games before splitting last season between Rome and Myrtle Beach. He was overpowering in the Carolina League this season, and, at age 22, is getting closer to pitching in Atlanta.

**I KNOW IT'S NOT TYPICAL TO SEE A GUY LIKE ME AT 5-FOOT-9 THROWING IN THE MID-90S.**



side in order in his final appearance with the team, on June 8...

**Chad Rodgers** is making a seamless move to the bullpen. The third-round draft pick from 2006 pitched in only seven games in 2009 due to a left shoulder injury. Rodgers bounced back from a 6.75 ERA in April by posting a 2.38 ERA in May...

**Brett Oberholtzer** has been battling a recurring blister problem on his pitching hand. The lefthander, who was promoted to Myrtle Beach after a strong April showing in Rome, is a solid prospect in his own right and gives the Pelicans even more depth in the rotation. Oberholtzer allowed only seven earned runs over four starts and 24 innings from May 20-June 7...

Catcher **Jesus Sucre** owned an impressive .419 success rate by throwing out 13 of the first 31 baserunners that attempted to steal against him this season...

The Pelicans received outfielder **L.V. Ware** from Rome on May 27. He was hitting only .222 in the South Atlantic League but paced the R-Braves with 16 stolen bases. The outfielder, whose full name is Leonardo DaVinci Ware, provided a spark in the lower third of the Pelicans lineup by getting on base in each of his first 12 games with the team. Included in that streak was a 3-for-4 outing with a walk-off infield single in a 4-3 win over Winston-Salem on June 7...

Third baseman **Samuel Sime** joined the Pelicans in early May after missing the first month of the season due to taking a **Randall Delgado** fastball to the face in spring training. The free-swinging Sime, who is wearing a clear face guard on his batting helmet, began his tenure with Myrtle Beach by hitting safely in his first nine games. Through his first 37 games, he led the team with a .286 batting average, .360 versus left-handed pitchers...

Infielders **Yoel Campusano**, **Geraldo Rodriguez** and **Amadeo Zazueta** were suspended on May 21 for 50 games each after they tested positive for an amphetamine, a performance-enhancing substance. The Braves signed first baseman/outfielder **Mike Jones** and infielder **Dan Nelson**, both of whom played in the Carolina League in 2009, to replace the suspended players, who are eligible to return on July 16...

After struggling his first week with the Pelicans, Jones started hitting the ball to the opposite field to become a force in the middle of the lineup. He was leading Myrtle Beach by hitting .389 (7-for-18) with nine RBIs with runners in scoring position.

The Pelicans and Winston-Salem Dash played the second-longest game in Carolina

League history on May 19 during the second game of a doubleheader. The 20-inning game was won by the Dash, 4-3. **Paul Clemens** and **Tyrelle Harris** posted career-highs for their longest relief appearances by working four scoreless innings apiece...

Outfielder **Cole Miles** stole a career-high three bases on May 23 at Wilmington and led the Carolina League with 19 steals through June 10. Miles also was tied for second in the league with six triples and reached base a team-high 18 straight games, from May 16-June 3...

**Van Pope**, once considered among the top prospects in the organization as a third baseman, was released from the Myrtle Beach roster on May 23. Pope made the move to the mound during spring training but had difficulty throwing strikes... The Braves also released infielder **Shayne Moody**, outfielder **Chris Shehan** and first baseman **Gerardo Avila**... Outfielder **Luis Sumoza** replaced Shehan on the roster after Sumoza was activated from the disabled list May 16.



ROME

CLASS A

**PITCHER Robinson Lopez** is making tremendous progress with the R-Braves and is on the verge of being considered one of the top prospects in the organization. Lopez ranked fourth in the Gulf Coast League last year with a 1.29 ERA and continues to throw strikes with a fastball that touches 94 mph as well as an excellent curveball and good changeup. The righthander posted a 2.61 ERA as a reliever in his first eight outings at Rome before moving to the rotation May 17. In his first five starts, Lopez went 1-2 with a 3.81 ERA...

Shortstop **Mycal Jones** was promoted to Myrtle Beach on June 10. A fourth-round draft pick in 2009, Jones batted .125 in April before hitting .353 with five home runs and 27 RBIs in his last 34 games at Rome...

**Jordan Kreke** went 4-for-4, scored three runs and had an RBI in a 5-0 victory over Greenville on June 10. Kreke, a 13th-round draft pick in 2009, also had a four-hit game on April 22 against Kannapolis...

**Caleb Brewer** made his debut with Rome on June 10 by allowing only one hit in five innings. Brewer displayed one of the best arms in the Gulf Coast League last year after missing all of the 2008 season with a hip injury. The Harris County, Ga., product throws a fastball that touches 95 mph and a hard, sharp curveball...

**David Hale** has been working out of the bullpen and threw four shutout innings versus Greenville on June 10. The Princeton University product went 0-4 with a 7.99 ERA as a member of the rotation before moving to the closer's role, beginning May 19. In his first five outings in relief, Hale was 1-1 with a 3.18 ERA and three saves in four opportunities...

Outfielder **Robert Hefflinger** has given the R-Braves some much-needed production in the lineup since joining the team from extended spring training on April 28. Hefflinger was drafted by the Braves in the seventh round last year and has shown the ability to spray line drives to all fields. "He's been a key part of our offense from the first day he arrived," said Rome manager Randy Ingle. "He's been our most consistent hitter, and he's really added some energy to the team..."

**Arodys Vizcaino** was named the SAL Pitcher of the Week for May 17-23 after he went 2-0 with a 0.00 ERA over 15 2/3 innings. He allowed only eight hits and struck out 14 batters over those two starts...

Pitcher **Chris Masters** was selected to the South Atlantic League All-Star Game's Southern Division roster. The Western Carolina University product had a 1.88 ERA after 11 starts but only a 1-3 record to show for it... Rome pitching coach **Jim Czajkowski** was picked to serve in the same capacity for the SAL Southern Division all-star squad.

## ORGANIZATIONAL NOTES

Shortstop **Edward Salcedo**, who signed with the Braves out of the Dominican Republic in March, is playing in the Dominican Summer League. Salcedo had eight hits in his first 30 at-bats, including three doubles and a home run. The Braves are working with Salcedo on his English in addition to his baseball skills and do not have a timetable for his debut in the United States...

The Braves signed former Cuban stand-out **Yasser Gomez** for a reported \$20,000 bonus in late May. The 30-year-old outfielder defected from Cuba in December 2008 and was in the Dominican Republic when he came to terms with Atlanta. Known for his speed and ability to put the ball in play, Gomez started in center field on the 2000 Cuban Olympic team in Sydney, Australia. He batted .331 during his career with Industriales and hit .311 this past winter in the Dominican...

The Braves released catcher **Daniel Elorriaga-Matra** and second baseman **Elys Blanco**.



# FARM STATISTICS

THROUGH JUNE 9



**GWINNETT**

**26-33**

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE TRIPLE A | COOLRAY FIELD (678) 277-0300

| BATTERS                 | AVG  | G  | AB  | R  | H  | 2B | 3B | HR | RBI | BB | SO | SB |
|-------------------------|------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Blanco, Gregor (OF)     | .294 | 39 | 136 | 22 | 40 | 8  | 0  | 1  | 10  | 22 | 26 | 8  |
| Bolivar, Luis (INF)     | .200 | 24 | 70  | 3  | 14 | 4  | 1  | 0  | 3   | 4  | 16 | 4  |
| Boscan, J.C. (C)        | .182 | 26 | 88  | 3  | 16 | 3  | 0  | 0  | 3   | 6  | 19 | 1  |
| Canizares, Barbaro (1B) | .283 | 50 | 173 | 25 | 49 | 11 | 1  | 3  | 21  | 13 | 23 | 0  |
| Cleven, Brent (OF)      | .259 | 26 | 85  | 14 | 22 | 7  | 0  | 1  | 14  | 18 | 26 | 3  |
| Freeman, Freddie (1B)   | .250 | 48 | 180 | 24 | 45 | 13 | 2  | 5  | 26  | 15 | 28 | 0  |
| Hicks, Brandon (SS)     | .205 | 47 | 156 | 14 | 32 | 7  | 0  | 2  | 12  | 18 | 35 | 8  |
| Holt, J.C. (2B)         | .167 | 15 | 36  | 4  | 6  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 3   | 3  | 6  | 1  |
| Jones, Mitch (OF)       | .254 | 50 | 189 | 25 | 48 | 18 | 1  | 10 | 26  | 10 | 49 | 0  |
| Romero, Alex (OF)       | .222 | 11 | 36  | 1  | 8  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 2  | 5  | 1  |
| Sammons, Clint (C)      | .174 | 35 | 109 | 10 | 19 | 3  | 0  | 2  | 11  | 14 | 22 | 2  |
| Schafer, Jordan (OF)    | .212 | 20 | 85  | 7  | 18 | 3  | 1  | 0  | 4   | 5  | 21 | 4  |
| Thurston, Joe (INF)     | .242 | 53 | 182 | 11 | 44 | 8  | 1  | 5  | 26  | 14 | 23 | 3  |
| Timmons, Wes (3B)       | .265 | 54 | 181 | 22 | 48 | 13 | 1  | 0  | 18  | 27 | 20 | 9  |
| Young, Matt (OF)        | .260 | 54 | 192 | 24 | 50 | 13 | 2  | 2  | 12  | 16 | 21 | 10 |

| PITCHERS            | W-L | ERA  | G  | GS | SV | IP   | H  | R  | ER | BB | SO | OBA  |
|---------------------|-----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| Dunn, Michael       | 1-0 | 0.67 | 20 | 0  | 4  | 26.2 | 18 | 3  | 2  | 11 | 36 | .191 |
| Gearrin, Cory       | 0-3 | 4.02 | 22 | 0  | 0  | 31.1 | 27 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 27 | .248 |
| Gomez, Mariano      | 2-2 | 3.06 | 20 | 0  | 1  | 32.1 | 28 | 14 | 11 | 12 | 22 | .243 |
| Gustafson, Tim      | 5-4 | 5.40 | 10 | 9  | 0  | 48.1 | 54 | 31 | 29 | 27 | 20 | .293 |
| Kimbrel, Craig      | 1-0 | 1.23 | 16 | 0  | 8  | 22.0 | 10 | 3  | 3  | 8  | 35 | .135 |
| Lyman, Jeff         | 0-0 | 4.55 | 18 | 0  | 0  | 29.2 | 25 | 21 | 15 | 21 | 22 | .229 |
| Marek, Stephen      | 0-0 | 2.38 | 12 | 0  | 2  | 11.1 | 14 | 6  | 3  | 6  | 8  | .304 |
| Martinez, Cristhian | 1-1 | 5.04 | 12 | 0  | 0  | 25.0 | 25 | 15 | 14 | 4  | 22 | .253 |
| Nunez, Vladimir     | 0-0 | 2.00 | 11 | 0  | 0  | 18.0 | 16 | 4  | 4  | 5  | 16 | .235 |
| Ortega, Jose        | 2-1 | 4.55 | 5  | 5  | 0  | 27.2 | 32 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 15 | .302 |
| Parr, James         | 2-5 | 5.16 | 9  | 9  | 0  | 45.1 | 54 | 26 | 26 | 17 | 28 | .305 |
| Redmond, Todd       | 6-5 | 4.15 | 12 | 12 | 0  | 69.1 | 67 | 34 | 32 | 13 | 61 | .254 |
| Resop, Chris        | 4-2 | 2.10 | 12 | 12 | 0  | 64.1 | 45 | 16 | 15 | 27 | 73 | .200 |
| Reyes, Jo-Jo        | 0-3 | 5.94 | 6  | 4  | 0  | 16.2 | 18 | 11 | 11 | 3  | 14 | .273 |
| Reynoso, Ryne       | 0-5 | 4.95 | 8  | 7  | 0  | 36.1 | 50 | 22 | 20 | 15 | 22 | .336 |
| Venters, Jonny      | 1-0 | 1.35 | 2  | 1  | 0  | 6.2  | 4  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 6  | .167 |



**MISSISSIPPI**

**26-32**

SOUTHERN LEAGUE DOUBLE A | TRUSTMARK PARK (601) 664-7600

| BATTERS                    | AVG  | G  | AB  | R  | H  | 2B | 3B | HR | RBI | BB | SO | SB |
|----------------------------|------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Bolivar, Luis (SS)         | .263 | 22 | 80  | 12 | 21 | 3  | 2  | 0  | 6   | 9  | 23 | 2  |
| Cabrera, Willie (OF)       | .320 | 47 | 172 | 20 | 55 | 13 | 0  | 2  | 23  | 14 | 24 | 3  |
| Daniel, Michael (OF)       | .172 | 9  | 29  | 2  | 5  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3  | 6  | 1  |
| Duncan, Eric (INF)         | .292 | 57 | 212 | 24 | 62 | 9  | 2  | 3  | 24  | 13 | 47 | 3  |
| Gomez, Mauro (1B)          | .232 | 57 | 211 | 32 | 49 | 16 | 1  | 6  | 32  | 18 | 51 | 0  |
| Gonzalez, Juan (INF)       | .186 | 19 | 59  | 5  | 11 | 2  | 0  | 0  | 6   | 7  | 17 | 0  |
| Gress, Randy (INF)         | .280 | 29 | 75  | 11 | 21 | 3  | 0  | 2  | 6   | 9  | 20 | 0  |
| Johnson, Benji (C)         | .079 | 13 | 38  | 4  | 3  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1   | 7  | 15 | 0  |
| Johnson, Cody (OF)         | .204 | 54 | 181 | 21 | 37 | 5  | 0  | 10 | 31  | 17 | 84 | 8  |
| Jones, Travis (2B)         | .225 | 33 | 71  | 13 | 16 | 2  | 0  | 1  | 5   | 6  | 19 | 3  |
| Linares, Donell (3B)       | .261 | 55 | 218 | 30 | 57 | 13 | 1  | 8  | 29  | 9  | 23 | 2  |
| Machado, Alejandro (INF)   | .167 | 15 | 42  | 5  | 7  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 2   | 8  | 7  | 0  |
| Mercado, Orlando (C)       | .286 | 48 | 161 | 22 | 46 | 4  | 0  | 0  | 17  | 22 | 25 | 2  |
| Richardson, Antwan (OF)    | .333 | 12 | 45  | 9  | 15 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 2   | 5  | 8  | 3  |
| Rodriguez, Concepcion (OF) | .227 | 32 | 97  | 5  | 22 | 5  | 1  | 0  | 12  | 6  | 21 | 1  |
| Romero, Alex (OF)          | .279 | 43 | 165 | 25 | 46 | 8  | 1  | 1  | 19  | 20 | 14 | 1  |

| PITCHERS          | W-L | ERA  | G  | GS | SV | IP   | H  | R  | ER | BB | SO | OBA  |
|-------------------|-----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| Abreu, Juan       | 2-0 | 1.32 | 11 | 0  | 1  | 13.2 | 11 | 2  | 2  | 6  | 15 | .220 |
| Beachy, Brandon   | 1-0 | 1.56 | 18 | 0  | 1  | 34.2 | 30 | 9  | 6  | 14 | 41 | .236 |
| Broadway, Michael | 1-1 | 2.60 | 13 | 0  | 0  | 17.1 | 12 | 5  | 5  | 9  | 23 | .194 |
| Butts, Brett      | 0-1 | 1.52 | 15 | 0  | 3  | 23.2 | 18 | 5  | 4  | 6  | 28 | .212 |
| Chapman, Jaye     | 0-2 | 3.18 | 9  | 0  | 0  | 11.1 | 14 | 6  | 4  | 4  | 13 | .304 |
| Cofield, Kyle     | 1-1 | 4.43 | 5  | 4  | 0  | 20.1 | 17 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 15 | .218 |
| Cordier, Erik     | 4-4 | 4.23 | 11 | 11 | 0  | 61.2 | 50 | 34 | 29 | 37 | 55 | .227 |
| Diamond, Scott    | 2-5 | 4.45 | 11 | 11 | 0  | 62.2 | 72 | 33 | 31 | 27 | 62 | .294 |
| Hyde, Lee         | 2-1 | 2.03 | 20 | 0  | 5  | 26.2 | 26 | 12 | 6  | 8  | 25 | .252 |
| Marek, Stephen    | 4-0 | 0.00 | 11 | 0  | 4  | 13.0 | 7  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 18 | .163 |
| Minor, Mike       | 1-5 | 4.24 | 12 | 12 | 0  | 70.0 | 56 | 40 | 33 | 29 | 93 | .220 |
| Palica, Thomas    | 3-1 | 8.25 | 19 | 0  | 0  | 24.0 | 30 | 23 | 22 | 13 | 37 | .303 |
| Reynoso, Ryne     | 0-1 | 5.68 | 6  | 0  | 0  | 12.2 | 11 | 8  | 8  | 4  | 14 | .224 |
| Sullivan, Richard | 1-6 | 6.14 | 12 | 11 | 0  | 58.2 | 77 | 48 | 40 | 25 | 37 | .330 |
| Thompson, Jacob   | 3-4 | 6.36 | 13 | 9  | 0  | 52.1 | 65 | 43 | 37 | 17 | 32 | .301 |



**MYRTLE BEACH**

**22-38**

CAROLINA LEAGUE ADVANCED A | BBST COASTAL FIELD (843) 918-6002

| BATTERS                    | AVG  | G  | AB  | R  | H  | 2B | 3B | HR | RBI | BB | SO | SB |
|----------------------------|------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Avila, Gerardo (1B)        | .230 | 41 | 152 | 20 | 35 | 6  | 1  | 7  | 22  | 17 | 49 | 1  |
| Barba, Ryan (INF)          | .170 | 36 | 112 | 5  | 19 | 7  | 0  | 0  | 5   | 4  | 17 | 3  |
| Capusano, Yoel (2B)        | .192 | 36 | 130 | 14 | 25 | 5  | 0  | 3  | 11  | 19 | 27 | 2  |
| Culver, Calvin (OF)        | .240 | 34 | 121 | 7  | 29 | 2  | 0  | 0  | 10  | 7  | 20 | 0  |
| Jones, Michael (1B)        | .271 | 18 | 70  | 3  | 19 | 3  | 0  | 1  | 12  | 5  | 11 | 0  |
| Kennelly, Mathew (C)       | .218 | 36 | 124 | 14 | 27 | 5  | 1  | 1  | 12  | 19 | 21 | 1  |
| Miles, Cole (OF)           | .254 | 49 | 189 | 24 | 48 | 2  | 6  | 0  | 12  | 20 | 37 | 19 |
| Milligan, Adam (OF)        | .200 | 21 | 85  | 13 | 17 | 3  | 0  | 4  | 8   | 9  | 35 | 2  |
| Moody, Shayne (3B)         | .241 | 23 | 87  | 15 | 21 | 2  | 0  | 1  | 9   | 6  | 12 | 0  |
| Nelson, Dan (INF)          | .254 | 36 | 130 | 26 | 33 | 7  | 0  | 5  | 18  | 21 | 24 | 3  |
| Rodriguez, Gerardo (OF/1B) | .239 | 40 | 163 | 32 | 39 | 8  | 3  | 8  | 24  | 10 | 65 | 2  |
| Shehan, Chris (OF)         | .181 | 22 | 72  | 5  | 13 | 1  | 2  | 0  | 3   | 9  | 17 | 3  |
| Sime, Samuel (INF)         | .286 | 37 | 133 | 8  | 38 | 5  | 0  | 1  | 12  | 10 | 24 | 2  |
| Sucre, Jesus (C)           | .207 | 44 | 174 | 12 | 36 | 7  | 0  | 3  | 19  | 5  | 24 | 0  |
| Sumoza, Luis (OF)          | .192 | 21 | 73  | 4  | 14 | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0   | 3  | 26 | 0  |
| Zazueta, Amadeo (INF)      | .163 | 23 | 92  | 7  | 15 | 4  | 0  | 2  | 7   | 2  | 11 | 2  |

| PITCHERS           | W-L | ERA  | G  | GS | SV | IP   | H  | R  | ER | BB | SO | OBA  |
|--------------------|-----|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| Abreu, Juan        | 0-0 | 8.22 | 8  | 0  | 1  | 15.1 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 8  | 15 | .241 |
| Avilan, Luis       | 0-0 | 1.00 | 6  | 0  | 1  | 9.0  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 4  | 5  | .074 |
| Castro, Yelmar     | 3-2 | 5.29 | 17 | 2  | 0  | 34.0 | 30 | 22 | 20 | 24 | 32 | .240 |
| Chapman, Jaye      | 0-1 | 5.68 | 10 | 0  | 2  | 12.2 | 10 | 8  | 8  | 7  | 21 | .208 |
| Crim, Matthew      | 3-4 | 4.27 | 13 | 8  | 0  | 65.1 | 71 | 38 | 31 | 22 | 37 | .278 |
| Delgado, Randall   | 2-5 | 2.42 | 13 | 13 | 0  | 78.0 | 59 | 27 | 21 | 17 | 87 | .211 |
| Francis, David     | 1-3 | 4.10 | 14 | 0  | 0  | 26.1 | 34 | 15 | 12 | 14 | 24 | .312 |
| Harris, Tyrelle    | 0-1 | 5.59 | 6  | 0  | 0  | 9.2  | 12 | 6  | 6  | 6  | 15 | .308 |
| Hoover, J.J.       | 4-3 | 3.18 | 12 | 12 | 0  | 68.0 | 67 | 29 | 24 | 16 | 52 | .251 |
| Oberholtzer, Brett | 2-3 | 4.87 | 8  | 8  | 0  | 44.1 | 61 | 25 | 24 | 8  | 30 | .335 |
| Ortega, Jose       | 2-4 | 5.14 | 7  | 7  | 0  | 28.0 | 41 | 20 | 16 | 7  | 14 | .342 |
| Paulino, Angelo    | 1-1 | 2.83 | 20 | 0  | 1  | 35.0 | 38 | 11 | 11 | 15 | 33 | .288 |
| Pope, Van          | 0-2 | 6.35 | 9  | 0  | 0  | 11.1 | 8  | 9  | 8  | 16 | 5  | .190 |
| Pruneda, Benino    | 1-1 | 2.70 | 20 | 0  | 5  | 30.2 | 25 | 14 | 9  | 14 | 44 | .223 |
| Rodgers, Chad      | 1-5 | 5.79 | 15 | 0  | 0  | 23.1 | 25 | 18 | 15 | 18 | 22 | .278 |
| Teheran, Julio     | 2-0 | 1.04 | 4  | 4  | 0  | 26.0 | 20 | 3  | 3  | 4  | 32 | .208 |



**ROME**

**25-34**

SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE CLASS A | STATE MUTUAL STADIUM (706) 368-9388

| BATTERS                    | AVG  | G  | AB  | R  | H  | 2B | 3B | HR | RBI | BB | SO | SB |
|----------------------------|------|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|
| Bethancourt, Christian (C) | .247 | 45 | 174 | 14 | 43 | 8  | 0  | 2  | 15  | 6  | 23 | 1  |
| Curley, Chris (INF)        | .200 | 13 | 40  | 4  | 8  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 3   | 3  | 6  | 0  |
| Flores, Ramon (OF)         | .220 | 17 | 59  | 6  | 13 | 2  | 1  | 1  | 2   | 2  | 11 | 2  |
| Hanson, Jake (OF)          | .250 | 20 | 72  | 8  | 18 | 5  | 1  | 1  | 7   | 2  | 25 | 2  |
| Harrilchak, Cory (OF)      | .298 | 50 | 181 | 24 | 54 | 9  | 3  | 0  | 17  | 20 | 19 | 13 |
| Hefflinger, Robert (OF/1B) | .264 | 38 | 140 | 16 | 37 | 14 | 0  | 2  | 30  | 15 | 47 | 0  |
| Jones, Mycal (SS)          | .261 | 53 | 199 | 27 | 52 | 12 | 0  | 6  | 34  | 11 | 48 | 6  |
| Kramer, Matt (1B/C)        | .178 | 12 | 45  | 0  | 8  | 3  | 0  | 0  | 2   | 0  | 15 | 0  |
| Kreke, Jordan (INF)        | .236 | 50 | 191 | 23 | 45 | 6  | 1  | 0  | 22  | 14 | 31 | 5  |
| Lovett, Chris (INF)        | .250 | 21 | 68  | 5  | 17 | 1  | 1  | 0  | 2   | 5  | 11 | 0  |
| Marval, Osman (INF/C)      | .226 | 20 | 62  | 6  | 14 | 2  | 0  | 1  | 9   | 6  | 11 | 0  |
| Rose, Kyle (OF)            | .263 | 52 | 190 | 27 | 50 | 2  | 2  | 0  | 10  | 19 | 40 | 15 |
| Schlehuber, Braeden (C)    | .183 | 29 | 93  | 10 | 17 | 4  | 0  | 1  | 7   | 3  | 12 | 0  |
| Ware, L.V. (OF)            | .222 | 38 | 126 | 20 | 28 | 4  | 1  | 1  | 11  | 8  | 27 | 16 |
| Weaver, Matthew (INF)      | .231 | 49 | 173 | 12 | 40 | 8  | 2  | 0  | 16  | 10 | 52 | 3  |
| Whitmer, Jace (1B/C)       | .239 | 16 | 56  | 7  | 19 | 5  | 1  | 1  | 9   | 1  | 6  | 0  |



# JUNE / JULY

HOME

AWAY

ALL GAMES ON  
ROCK 100.5,  
680 THE FAN,  
AND RADIO  
NETWORK  
AFFILIATES.

**ROCK 100.5**  
ATLANTA'S ROCK STATION

**680**  
SPORTS RADIO  
*The Fan*

FSS **FSSOUTH**

PTV **Peachtree TV**

SS **SPORTSOUTH**

FOX **FOX**

ESPN **ESPN**

| SUNDAY                           | MONDAY                       | TUESDAY                                           | WEDNESDAY                   | THURSDAY                     | FRIDAY                       | SATURDAY                     |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 27 1:30<br><b>DET</b><br>FSS/TBS | 28 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>PTV | 29 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>PTV                      | 30 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 1                            | 2 7:30<br><b>FLA</b><br>PTV  | 3 4:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>FOX  |
| 4 5:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>FSS      | 5 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>PTV  | 6 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>PTV                       | 7 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>PTV | 8                            | 9 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>SS   | 10 4:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>FOX |
| 11 1:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>FSS     | 12                           | 13 8:00<br><b>ALL-STAR</b><br>GAME<br>ANAHEIM FOX | 14                          | 15 7:00<br><b>MIL</b><br>PTV | 16 7:30<br><b>MIL</b><br>PTV | 17 7:00<br><b>MIL</b><br>SS  |
| 18 1:30<br><b>MIL</b><br>FSS     | 19                           | 20 7:00<br><b>SD</b><br>PTV                       | 21 7:00<br><b>SD</b><br>PTV | 22 1:00<br><b>SD</b><br>SS   | 23 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS  | 24 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS  |
| 25 1:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>FSS     | 26                           | 27 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS                       | 28 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 29 12:30<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 30 7:00<br><b>CIN</b><br>SS  | 31 7:00<br><b>CIN</b><br>SS  |

# AUGUST

| SUNDAY                       | MONDAY                       | TUESDAY                      | WEDNESDAY                   | THURSDAY                    | FRIDAY                      | SATURDAY                     |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 1:00<br><b>CIN</b><br>FSS  | 2 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>ESPN | 3 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV  | 4 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV | 5 7:00<br><b>SF</b><br>PTV  | 6 7:30<br><b>SF</b><br>PTV  | 7 4:00<br><b>SF</b><br>FOX   |
| 8 1:30<br><b>SF</b><br>FSS   | 9 8:00<br><b>HOU</b><br>SS   | 10 8:00<br><b>HOU</b><br>SS  | 11 2:00<br><b>HOU</b><br>SS | 12                          | 13 7:30<br><b>LA</b><br>PTV | 14 7:00<br><b>LA</b><br>PTV  |
| 15 1:30<br><b>LA</b><br>FSS  | 16 7:00<br><b>LA</b><br>PTV  | 17 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS  | 18 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 19 1:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 20 2:00<br><b>CHC</b><br>SS | 21 4:00<br><b>CHC</b><br>FOX |
| 22 TBD<br><b>CHC</b><br>FSS  | 23 8:30<br><b>COL</b><br>SS  | 24 8:30<br><b>COL</b><br>SS  | 25 3:00<br><b>COL</b><br>SS | 26                          | 27 7:30<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS | 28 4:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>FOX |
| 29 1:30<br><b>FLA</b><br>FSS | 30 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV | 31 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV |                             |                             |                             |                              |

# SEPT

| SUNDAY                       | MONDAY                      | TUESDAY                     | WEDNESDAY                        | THURSDAY                    | FRIDAY                       | SATURDAY                     |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                              |                             |                             | 1 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV/ESPN | 2 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>PTV | 3 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS   | 4 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS   |
| 5 1:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>FSS  | 6 1:30<br><b>PIT</b><br>SS  | 7 7:00<br><b>PIT</b><br>SS  | 8 7:00<br><b>PIT</b><br>SS       | 9 7:00<br><b>STL</b><br>PTV | 10 7:30<br><b>STL</b><br>PTV | 11 4:00<br><b>STL</b><br>FOX |
| 12 1:30<br><b>STL</b><br>FSS | 13 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 14 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS | 15 12:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS     | 16                          | 17 7:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>SS  | 18 4:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>FOX |
| 19 1:00<br><b>NYM</b><br>FSS | 20 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>SS | 21 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>SS | 22 7:00<br><b>PHI</b><br>SS      | 23                          | 24 7:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS  | 25 1:00<br><b>WAS</b><br>SS  |
| 26 1:30<br><b>WAS</b><br>FSS | 27 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS | 28 7:00<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS | 29 4:30<br><b>FLA</b><br>SS      | 30                          |                              |                              |

2010 SCHEDULE



# OCT. / NOV.

| SUNDAY                | MONDAY                | TUESDAY               | WEDNESDAY             | THURSDAY              | FRIDAY                | SATURDAY              |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       | 1 7:30<br>PHI<br>SS   | 2 7:00<br>PHI<br>SS   | <b>ROCK100.5</b><br><small>ATLANTA'S ROCK STATION</small><br><b>SPORTS RADIO 680</b><br><i>The Fan</i><br><small>ALL GAMES ON ROCK 100.5, 680 THE FAN, AND RADIO NETWORK AFFILIATES.</small> |
| 3 1:30<br>PHI<br>FSS  | 4                     | 5                     | 6 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS  | 7 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS  | 8 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS  | 9 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS  | <b>FSS</b> <b>FS SOUTH</b><br><b>PTV</b> <b>Peachtree TV</b>                                                                                                                                 |
| 10 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS | 11 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS | 12 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS | 13 TBD<br>NLDS<br>TBS | 14                    | 15 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 16 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | <b>SS</b> <b>SPORTSOUTH</b><br><b>FOX</b> <b>FOX</b>                                                                                                                                         |
| 17 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 18 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 19 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 20 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 21 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 22 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 23 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | <b>ESPN</b> <b>ESPN</b>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 24 TBD<br>NLCS<br>FOX | 25                    | 26                    | 27 TBD<br>WS<br>FOX   | 28 TBD<br>WS<br>FOX   | 29                    | 30 TBD<br>WS<br>FOX   |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 31 TBD<br>WS<br>FOX   | 1 TBD<br>WS*<br>FOX   | 2                     | 3 TBD<br>WS*<br>FOX   | 4 TBD<br>WS*<br>FOX   |                       |                       |                                                                                                                                                                                              |

POST-SEASON DATES ARE TENTATIVE, UNOFFICIAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

\*If Necessary

World Series home field advantage (Games 1, 2, 6 and 7) is awarded to the team representing the league that wins the July 13 All-Star Game.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

**HEYWARD:** My impression wasn't to feel pressure. What I've always wanted to do as a person was, (1) play baseball, (2) do something to help or influence the people around me. I didn't go to (college), but there are things I've picked up through the years

**AS FAR AS PRESSURE, IT'S NEVER THERE FOR ME. IT DOESN'T EXIST.**

and I don't mind sharing that with other people. I like telling people things I've learned that can help them. I do that with my friends all the time. The time will come when I can reach out in many different ways, so as far as what Hank said, I don't feel any pressure. It's part of who I am and what I do anyway. I've been involved with L.E.A.D. (Launch Expose Advise Direct) for three years, and part of their mission is to expose inner city kids to baseball instruction. The thing that's great about L.E.A.D. isn't just bringing them to baseball, but encouraging them to get their education, opening up opportunities because that takes you so far. They get so many experiences from understanding a business-like lifestyle, wearing a dress shirt, being clean-shaven, knowing how to hold a conversation in the proper way.

**CT:** Even though it was probably a forgone conclusion that you'd be drafted and sign to play pro ball, you signed a letter of intent with UCLA. Why there?

**HEYWARD:** The first time I visited a college was my great uncle, Kenneth Washington's induction into the UCLA Athletic Hall of Fame (2005). He played basketball for Coach John Wooden. In 1964, they won the national championship against Duke. I went out there and my dad and uncle set it up for me to meet the (baseball) coach and see the school. It's a beautiful campus, one of the most academically respected schools in the country, and as far as athletics goes, they have a good program. I liked the combination of academics and athletics.

**CT:** You've often said you don't feel the pressure of playing at the major league level and you don't appear to show any signs of feeling pressure. How are you able to compartmentalize or channel the emotion you must be feeling?

**HEYWARD:** It's just who I am, a part of me. It's something I've been able to do my whole life. I don't see things as pressure. It's fun. It's the game. It's where you want to be. You want to be in the loud stadium, whether at home or on the road. You want to be in the

tight games. That's the fun of it. That's what I love about it. Those situations are more fun to me than a blowout game. It's nice to have blowouts every now and then, so everybody can just say, "Whew, we got that one out of the way," but the close games are fun. The situations are huge. That's what this game is about. As far as pressure, it's never there for me. It doesn't exist.

**CT:** Do you wish your dad had let you play football or basketball?

**HEYWARD:** No, I'm very happy I didn't play football, because as I got older, I saw how that looks like it hurts. If I had played basketball, I think my knees would have been gone by now.

**CT:** Give us a scouting report on your brother Jacob, 14.

**HEYWARD:** I can't tell you too much, because I haven't gotten to see him play as much as I would like. Our schedules go against each other. He's athletic and has a baseball mind. That's something that helped me. He is right-handed. He plays any corner position. He plays outfield really well and has a pretty good arm. He's going to be faster than me, that's for sure. My dad is 6-foot-3, so he could be at least that tall and maybe taller than me (6-foot-5).



# MLB

TO PURCHASE TICKETS OR FOR TICKET INFORMATION,  
CALL (404) 577-9100 OR VISIT [braves.com](http://braves.com)

## INDIVIDUAL GAME TICKETS

Single game tickets are available at [braves.com/tickets](http://braves.com/tickets), the Braves box office at Turner Field, by calling 1-800-745-3000, and at all TicketMaster outlets.

| LOCATION                    | PRICE | PREMIUM* |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------|
| Skyline#                    | \$1   | \$1      |
| Upper Pavilion              | \$6   | \$8      |
| Upper Reserved              | \$8   | \$12     |
| Upper Box                   | \$12  | \$16     |
| Terrace Reserved            | \$24  | \$28     |
| Field/Terrace Pavilion      | \$24  | \$28     |
| Field Reserved              | \$28  | \$32     |
| Golden Moon Casino Pavilion | \$28  | \$32     |
| Terrace Level               | \$36  | \$40     |
| Field Level                 | \$38  | \$42     |
| Golden Moon Casino Level    | \$44  | \$48     |
| Dugout Level                | \$64  | \$68     |
| Henry Aaron Seats           | \$74  | \$78     |

#Available only at Turner Field two and a half hours before games.

\*Premium games include July 4 and all Friday and Saturday games.

## 2-FOR-1 TICKETS

- \* **Mondays** 2 Golden Moon Casino Pavilion for \$28
- \* **Tuesdays** 2 Upper Reserved for \$8
- \* **Wednesdays** 2 Field/Terrace Pavilion for \$24
- \* Fans with college or military ID or a AAA card also can purchase two Upper Box tickets for the price of one.

## \$1 TICKETS

- \* **\$1 SkyLine Seats** - Available two and a half hours before every game at the Turner Field Ticket Office.
- \* **Buck Belue Buck Night** - \$1 Tickets for all Upper Reserved Seats On Following Mondays (all 7:10 p.m.): June 28 vs. Nationals, Aug. 2 vs. Mets, Aug. 16 vs. Dodgers, Aug. 30 vs. Mets, Sept. 13 vs. Nationals, Sept. 27 vs. Marlins.

## FAMILY VALUE PLAN

Get 4 tickets, 4 hotdogs, 4 Cokes, a parking pass, a program and \$5 Chevron gift card for as low as \$59 (upper box seats). Upgrade to Outfield Pavilion for \$79 (total) or Golden Moon Casino Pavilion for \$99 (total).

## SEASON TICKET PLANS

The following ticket plans are on sale. For more information, visit [braves.com](http://braves.com) or call (404) 577-9100 to inquire about pro-rated options.

### TYPE

\***Added Value:** Save 20 percent by adding \$10 to your game ticket, which is stored on the bar code for each game, for \$8. The added value can be used at any concession stand. \$10 is already included in the Henry Aaron and Club Level areas.

\***755 Club:** A 755 Club membership is automatically included in Henry Aaron, Club Level and Club Pavilion areas.

\***2-For-1:** 2-For-1 Season Tickets are available in rows 11 and higher in the Upper Box.

## FULL SEASON

| Level             | *Type                | Price   |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Henry Aaron Seats | Added Value/755 Club | \$5,146 |
| Dugout            | Regular              | \$4,482 |
| Terrace           | Regular              | \$2,490 |
| Field             | Regular              | \$2,822 |
| Club              | Added Value/755 Club | \$3,154 |
| Outfield Pavilion | Regular              | \$1,162 |
| Upper Box         | 2-For-1              | \$415   |
| Terrace Reserved  | Regular              | \$996   |
| Field Reserved    | Regular              | \$1,162 |
| Club Pavilion     | 755 Club             | \$1,162 |
| Upper Pavilion    | Regular              | \$249   |

## HALF SEASON

| Level             | *Type                | Price   |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Field             | Regular              | \$1,512 |
| Club              | Added Value/755 Club | \$1,764 |
| Outfield Pavilion | Regular              | \$756   |
| Upper Box         | Regular              | \$462   |

## WEEKENDS

| Level     | *Type                | Price   |
|-----------|----------------------|---------|
| Field     | Regular              | \$1,080 |
| Club      | Added Value/755 Club | \$1,260 |
| Outfield  | Regular              | \$540   |
| Upper Box | Regular              | \$330   |



## FLEX PLANS

- \* Minimum of 10 games for as low as \$110 per seat.
- \* Change dates if your plans change.

| Section       | Gate Price | Flex Price |
|---------------|------------|------------|
| Golden Moon   | \$44/48    | \$42       |
| Field Level   | \$38/42    | \$37       |
| Terrace       | \$36/40    | \$35       |
| Field/Terrace | \$24/28    | \$22       |
| Pavilion      |            |            |
| Upper Box     | \$12/16    | \$11       |

## GROUP TICKETS

Groups of 20 or more receive discounted prices. Call (404) 577-9100 for information.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

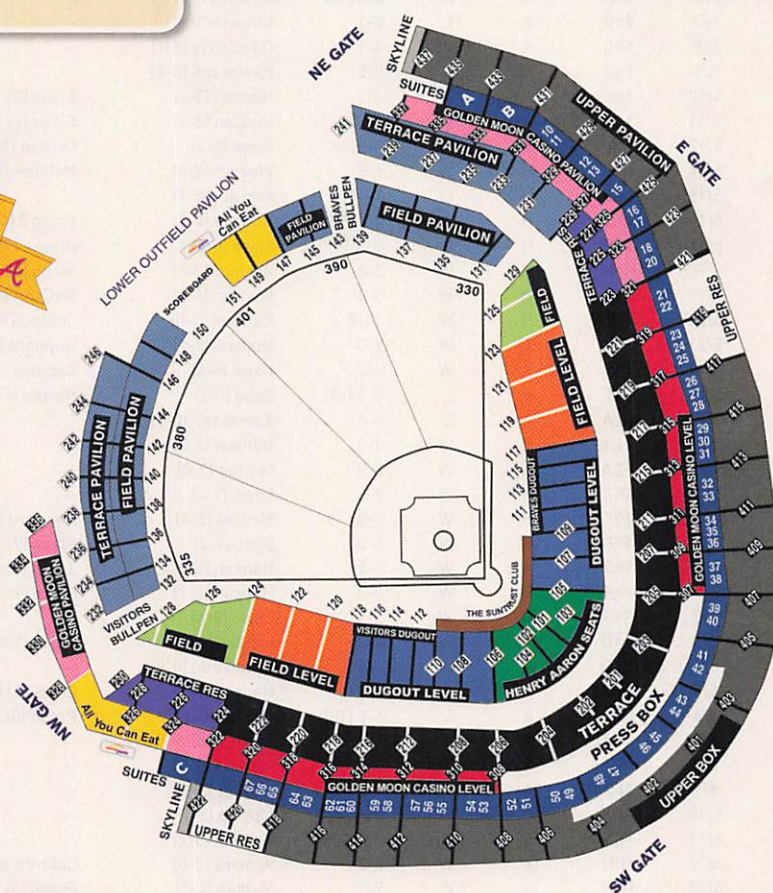
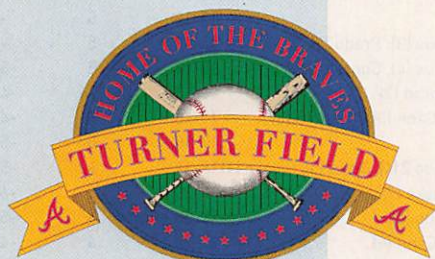
The Braves are offering all fans a birthday present - a free ticket to a game at Turner Field. Fans can go to [braves.com/birthday](http://braves.com/birthday) to register for their free ticket to a game.

## PRIVATE SUITES

Located on the Golden Moon Casino Level. Climate controlled suite plus access to outside balcony seating. TVs, refrigerator, icemaker, wet bar and telephone. Available from two hours before the game until the last pitch. Call (404) 577-9100.

## BATTING PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

The Braves VIP Batting Practice Experience allows fans to get up close with the players during pre-game BP. The Batting Practice Experience begins three hours prior to the first pitch and is not available before Sunday home games (except July 4) or before afternoon games. The cost is \$55 for Monday-Thursday games and \$70 for Friday-Saturday games. Groups of 20 or more receive discounted rates (call 404-577-9100). BP Experience tickets do not include a game ticket. A separate game ticket must be purchased.





# BY GAME

| GAME | DATE | OPP | H/A | W-L | SCORE    | W/L PITCHER      | ATL HRs                             | REC   | POS | GB   |
|------|------|-----|-----|-----|----------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|------|
| 1    | 4/5  | CHC | H   | W   | 16-5     | Lowe (1-0)       | Heyward (1), McCann (1)             | 1-0   | T-1 | —    |
| 2    | 4/7  | CHC | H   | W   | 3-2      | Moylan (1-0)     | Jones (1)                           | 2-0   | T-1 | —    |
| 3    | 4/8  | CHC | H   | L   | 0-2      | Hanson (0-1)     | —                                   | 2-1   | T-1 | —    |
| 4    | 4/9  | SF  | A   | L   | 4-5 (13) | Medlen (0-1)     | —                                   | 2-2   | 3   | -1   |
| 5    | 4/10 | SF  | A   | W   | 7-2      | Lowe (2-0)       | Heyward (2)                         | 3-2   | 2   | -1   |
| 6    | 4/11 | SF  | A   | L   | 3-6      | Kawakami (0-1)   | McCann (2), Heyward (3)             | 3-3   | 3   | -2   |
| 7    | 4/12 | SD  | A   | L   | 2-17     | Jurrjens (0-1)   | —                                   | 3-4   | 3   | -3   |
| 8    | 4/14 | SD  | A   | W   | 6-1      | Hanson (1-1)     | Glaus (1)                           | 4-4   | 3   | -3   |
| 9    | 4/15 | SD  | A   | W   | 6-2      | Hudson (1-0)     | Prado (1)                           | 5-4   | T-2 | -2   |
| 10   | 4/16 | COL | H   | W   | 9-5      | Lowe (3-0)       | Jones (2)                           | 6-4   | 2   | -2   |
| 11   | 4/17 | COL | H   | L   | 0-4      | Kawakami (0-2)   | --                                  | 6-5   | T-3 | -2   |
| 12   | 4/18 | COL | H   | W   | 4-3      | O'Flaherty (1-0) | --                                  | 7-5   | 3   | -1   |
| 13   | 4/20 | PHI | H   | W   | 4-3 (10) | Wagner (1-0)     | Glaus (2), Heyward (4), McLouth (1) | 8-5   | 1   | T-1  |
| 14   | 4/21 | PHI | H   | L   | 0-2      | Hudson (1-1)     | --                                  | 8-6   | 2   | -1   |
| 15   | 4/22 | PHI | H   | L   | 3-8      | Lowe (3-1)       | --                                  | 8-7   | 3   | -2   |
| 16   | 4/23 | NYM | A   | L   | 2-5      | Kawakami (0-3)   | --                                  | 8-8   | 4   | -2   |
| 17   | 4/24 | NYM | A   | L   | 1-3      | Jurrjens (0-2)   | --                                  | 8-9   | 5   | -3   |
| 18   | 4/25 | NYM | A   | L   | 0-1      | Hanson (1-2)     | --                                  | 8-10  | 5   | -3   |
| 19   | 4/26 | STL | A   | L   | 3-4      | Saito (0-1)      | --                                  | 8-11  | 5   | -3   |
| 20   | 4/27 | STL | A   | L   | 4-5      | Lowe (3-2)       | --                                  | 8-12  | 5   | -3 ½ |
| 21   | 4/28 | STL | A   | L   | 0-6      | Kawakami (0-4)   | --                                  | 8-13  | 5   | -4 ½ |
| 22   | 4/29 | STL | A   | L   | 4-10     | Jurrjens (0-3)   | Heyward (5)                         | 8-14  | 5   | -4 ½ |
| 23   | 4/30 | HOU | H   | W   | 4-2      | Hanson (2-2)     | McLouth (2), Heyward (6)            | 9-14  | 5   | -5   |
| 24   | 5/1  | HOU | H   | W   | 10-1     | Hudson (2-1)     | Heyward (7)                         | 10-14 | 5   | -4   |
| 25   | 5/2  | HOU | H   | W   | 7-1      | Lowe (4-2)       | --                                  | 11-14 | 5   | -3 ½ |
| 26   | 5/4  | WAS | A   | L   | 3-6      | Kawakami (0-5)   | Heyward (8)                         | 11-15 | 5   | -4   |
| 27   | 5/5  | WAS | A   | W   | 7-6 (10) | Medlen (1-1)     | Infante (1)                         | 12-15 | 5   | -4   |
| 28   | 5/6  | WAS | A   | L   | 2-3 (10) | O'Flaherty (1-1) | --                                  | 12-16 | 5   | -5   |
| 29   | 5/7  | PHI | A   | L   | 0-7      | Lowe (4-3)       | --                                  | 12-17 | 5   | -6   |
| 30   | 5/8  | PHI | A   | W   | 4-1      | O'Flaherty (2-1) | --                                  | 13-17 | 5   | -5   |
| 31   | 5/9  | PHI | A   | L   | 3-5      | Kawakami (0-6)   | --                                  | 13-18 | 5   | -6   |
| 32   | 5/10 | MIL | A   | W   | 8-2      | Hanson (3-2)     | Glaus (3), Prado (2)                | 14-18 | 5   | -6   |
| 33   | 5/11 | MIL | A   | W   | 11-3     | Hudson (3-1)     | Glaus (4), Conrad (1)               | 15-18 | 5   | -5 ½ |
| 34   | 5/12 | MIL | A   | W   | 9-2      | Lowe (5-3)       | Conrad (2)                          | 16-18 | T-4 | -4 ½ |
| 35   | 5/14 | ARZ | H   | W   | 6-5      | Wagner (2-0)     | McCann (3), McLouth (3)             | 17-18 | 5   | -4 ½ |
| 36   | 5/15 | ARZ | H   | L   | 1-11     | Hanson (3-3)     | --                                  | 17-19 | 5   | -5 ½ |
| 37   | 5/16 | ARZ | H   | W   | 13-1     | Hudson (4-1)     | Prado (2), Glaus (5), Hinske (1)    | 18-19 | 4   | -5 ½ |
| 38   | 5/17 | NYM | H   | L   | 2-3      | Lowe (5-4)       | Hinske (2)                          | 18-20 | 5   | -6 ½ |
| 39   | 5/18 | NYM | H   | W   | 3-2      | Wagner (3-0)     | Glaus (6)                           | 19-20 | 4   | -5 ½ |
| 40   | 5/19 | CIN | H   | W   | 5-4      | Wagner (4-0)     | McCann (4)                          | 20-20 | 4   | -4 ½ |
| 41   | 5/20 | CIN | H   | W   | 10-9     | Kimbrel (1-0)    | Conrad (3)                          | 21-20 | 3   | -4 ½ |
| 42   | 5/21 | PIT | A   | W   | 7-0      | Hudson (5-1)     | Heyward (9), McCann (5)             | 22-20 | 2   | -4 ½ |
| 43   | 5/22 | PIT | A   | W   | 4-2      | Lowe (6-4)       | Cabrera (1), Hinske (3)             | 23-20 | 2   | -3 ½ |
| 44   | 5/23 | PIT | A   | L   | 2-3 (10) | Saito (0-2)      | Hinske (4)                          | 23-21 | 2   | -3 ½ |
| 45   | 5/25 | FLA | A   | L   | 4-6      | Kawakami (0-7)   | --                                  | 23-22 | 3   | -3 ½ |
| 46   | 5/26 | FLA | A   | W   | 7-3      | Hanson (4-3)     | --                                  | 24-22 | 2   | -2 ½ |
| 47   | 5/27 | FLA | A   | W   | 8-3      | Moylan (2-0)     | --                                  | 25-22 | 2   | -1 ½ |
| 48   | 5/28 | PIT | H   | W   | 7-3      | Lowe (7-4)       | --                                  | 26-22 | 2   | -1 ½ |
| 49   | 5/29 | PIT | H   | W   | 6-3      | Medlen (2-1)     | Heyward (10)                        | 27-22 | 2   | -1 ½ |
| 50   | 5/30 | PIT | H   | W   | 5-2      | Saito (1-2)      | Glaus (7)                           | 28-22 | 2   | -1/2 |
| 51   | 5/31 | PHI | H   | W   | 9-3      | Hanson (5-3)     | Jones (3), Glaus (8)                | 29-22 | 1   | +1/2 |
| 52   | 6/1  | PHI | H   | W   | 7-3      | Hudson (6-1)     | Glaus (9)                           | 30-22 | 1   | +1 ½ |
| 53   | 6/2  | PHI | H   | W   | 2-1      | Lowe (8-4)       | --                                  | 31-22 | 1   | +2 ½ |
| 54   | 6/3  | LAD | A   | W   | 4-3      | Medlen (3-1)     | Glaus (10)                          | 32-22 | 1   | +3   |
| 55   | 6/4  | LAD | A   | L   | 4-5      | Kawakami (0-8)   | --                                  | 32-23 | 1   | +2   |
| 56   | 6/5  | LAD | A   | W   | 9-3      | Hanson (6-3)     | Glaus (11)                          | 33-23 | 1   | +2   |
| 57   | 6/6  | LAD | A   | L   | 4-5 (10) | Chavez (0-1)     | Prado (5), McCann (6)               | 33-24 | 1   | +2   |
| 58   | 6/7  | ARZ | A   | L   | 4-7      | Lowe (8-5)       | --                                  | 33-25 | 1   | +2   |
| 59   | 6/8  | ARZ | A   | W   | 7-5      | Venters (1-0)    | --                                  | 34-25 | 1   | +2   |
| 60   | 6/9  | ARZ | A   | L   | 1-2      | Moylan (2-1)     | --                                  | 34-26 | 1   | +1 ½ |
| 61   | 6/10 | ARZ | A   | W   | 11-7     | Moylan (3-1)     | --                                  | 35-26 | 1   | +2 ½ |
| 62   | 6/11 | MIN | A   | L   | 1-2      | Hudson (6-2)     | --                                  | 35-27 | 1   | +1 ½ |
| 63   | 6/12 | MIN | A   | W   | 3-2      | Venters (2-0)    | Cabrera (2)                         | 36-27 | 1   | +1 ½ |
| 64   | 6/13 | MIN | A   | W   | 7-3      | Medlen (4-1)     | Prado (6), Glaus (13)               | 37-27 | 1   | +1 ½ |



# INDIVIDUAL STATS

THROUGH JUNE 13

|                | AVG  | G  | AB    | R   | H   | 2B  | 3B | HR | RBI | TB  | BB  | SO  | SB | CS | OBP  | SLG  | E  |
|----------------|------|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|------|------|----|
| <b>BATTERS</b> |      |    |       |     |     |     |    |    |     |     |     |     |    |    |      |      |    |
| BLANCO         | .400 | 13 | 10    | 2   | 4   | 1   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 5   | 2   | 3   | 1  | 0  | .500 | .500 | 0  |
| PRADO          | .332 | 63 | 271   | 47  | 90  | 18  | 0  | 6  | 29  | 126 | 20  | 38  | 1  | 3  | .375 | .465 | 2  |
| HINSKE         | .316 | 52 | 117   | 20  | 37  | 14  | 1  | 4  | 24  | 65  | 14  | 26  | 0  | 0  | .386 | .556 | 1  |
| INFANTE        | .314 | 45 | 137   | 20  | 43  | 7   | 0  | 1  | 16  | 53  | 9   | 23  | 3  | 1  | .351 | .387 | 7  |
| ROSS           | .298 | 24 | 57    | 8   | 17  | 5   | 0  | 0  | 15  | 22  | 11  | 10  | 0  | 1  | .420 | .386 | 1  |
| GLAUS          | .290 | 64 | 224   | 35  | 65  | 9   | 0  | 13 | 49  | 113 | 34  | 56  | 0  | 0  | .382 | .504 | 5  |
| CONRAD         | .280 | 41 | 50    | 13  | 14  | 5   | 0  | 3  | 12  | 28  | 4   | 15  | 3  | 0  | .333 | .560 | 0  |
| RIGHT          | .125 |    | 8     |     | 1   | 0   | 0  | 0  | 1   | 1   | 1   | 3   |    |    | .222 | .125 |    |
| LEFT           | .310 |    | 42    |     | 13  | 5   | 0  | 3  | 11  | 27  | 3   | 12  |    |    | .356 | .643 |    |
| HEYWARD        | .265 | 60 | 215   | 35  | 57  | 12  | 3  | 10 | 43  | 105 | 39  | 57  | 4  | 4  | .388 | .488 | 4  |
| McCANN         | .260 | 53 | 177   | 28  | 46  | 9   | 0  | 6  | 27  | 73  | 33  | 32  | 2  | 1  | .384 | .412 | 5  |
| CLEVEL         | .250 | 3  | 4     | 2   | 1   | 1   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 2   | 0   | 1   | 0  | 0  | .250 | .500 | 0  |
| CABRERA        | .249 | 61 | 185   | 22  | 46  | 7   | 1  | 2  | 15  | 61  | 17  | 26  | 3  | 1  | .312 | .330 | 2  |
| RIGHT          | .222 |    | 63    |     | 14  | 5   | 0  | 0  | 2   | 19  | 6   | 8   |    |    | .290 | .302 |    |
| LEFT           | .262 |    | 122   |     | 32  | 2   | 1  | 2  | 13  | 42  | 11  | 18  |    |    | .323 | .344 |    |
| ESCOBAR        | .243 | 51 | 181   | 20  | 44  | 9   | 0  | 0  | 16  | 53  | 30  | 21  | 5  | 0  | .351 | .293 | 6  |
| JONES          | .228 | 51 | 167   | 22  | 38  | 10  | 0  | 3  | 22  | 57  | 40  | 27  | 3  | 0  | .375 | .341 | 5  |
| RIGHT          | .241 |    | 54    |     | 13  | 1   | 0  | 2  | 6   | 20  | 13  | 8   |    |    | .388 | .370 |    |
| LEFT           | .221 |    | 113   |     | 25  | 9   | 0  | 1  | 16  | 37  | 27  | 19  |    |    | .369 | .327 |    |
| DIAZ           | .178 | 26 | 73    | 5   | 13  | 3   | 1  | 0  | 5   | 18  | 5   | 20  | 2  | 0  | .231 | .247 | 1  |
| McLOUTH        | .176 | 57 | 170   | 20  | 30  | 9   | 0  | 3  | 14  | 48  | 26  | 46  | 4  | 2  | .295 | .282 | 1  |
| HICKS          | .000 | 6  | 1     | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0  | 0  | .000 | .000 | 0  |
| <b>ATLANTA</b> |      |    |       |     |     |     |    |    |     |     |     |     |    |    |      |      |    |
| OPPONENTS      | .262 | 64 | 2,157 | 312 | 565 | 124 | 6  | 51 | 295 | 854 | 295 | 436 | 31 | 13 | .352 | .396 | 42 |
|                | .246 | 64 | 2,088 | 251 | 513 | 111 | 12 | 50 | 242 | 798 | 215 | 455 | 35 | 16 | .320 | .382 | 51 |

**PINCH-HITTERS (AVG-H-HR-RBI)** Blanco (.000-1-0-0), Jones (.667-2-0-2), McLouth (.500-2-0-0), Heyward (.500-1-0-2), Cabrera (.429-3-0-0), Hinske (.333-7-1-5), Infante (.333-2-0-0), McCann (.333-1-0-1), Conrad (.280-7-1-5), Diaz (.250-2-0-0), Glaus (.000-0-0-0), Ross (.000-0-0-0), Hicks (.000-0-0-0), TEAM (.322-28-2-15).

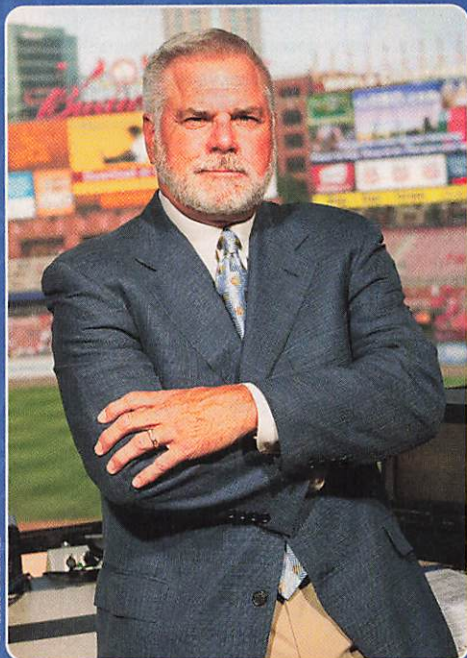
**PITCHERS (AVG-H-HR-RBI)** Medlen (.286-4-0-2), Hudson (.258-8-0-2), Hanson (.154-4-0-3), Kawakami (.111-2-0-0), Lowe (.100-2-0-1), Jurrjens (.000-0-0-0), Saito (.000-0-0-0), Chavez (.000-0-0-0), Martinez (.000-0-0-0), STAFF (.171-20-0-8).

## KEY

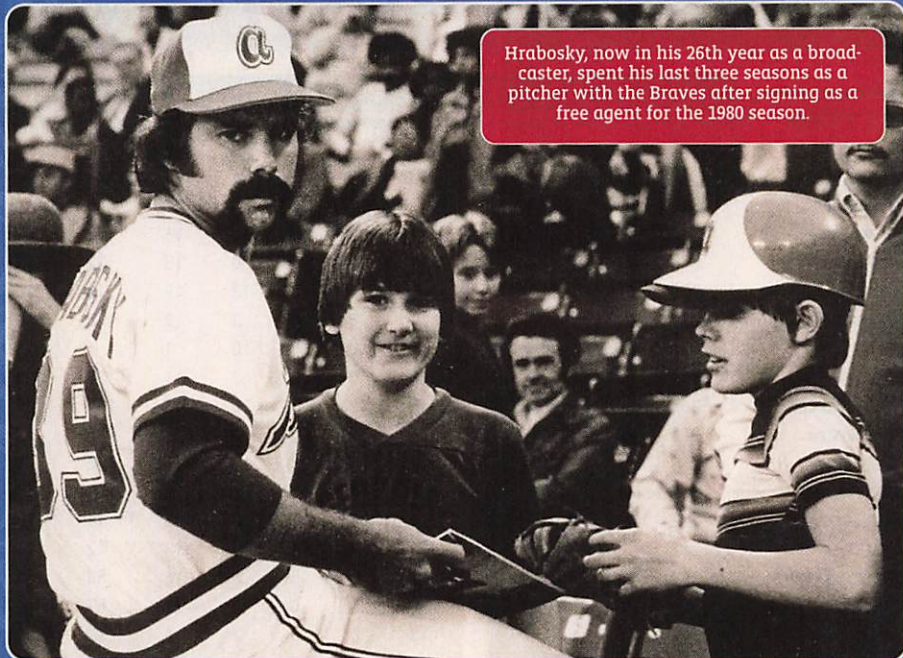
AVG-Batting average, SLG-Slugging percentage, OBP-On-base percentage, G-Games, AB-At-bats, R-Runs, H-Hits, 2B-Doubles, 3B-Triples, HR-Home runs, RBI-Runs batted in, TB-Total bases, BB-Walks, SO-Strikeouts, SB-Stolen bases, CS-Caught stealing, E-Errors, W-L-Wins-Losses, ERA-Earned run average, GS-Starts, GF-Games finished, SV-Saves, IP-Innings pitched, HB-Hit batters, WP-Wild pitches, OBA-Opponents' batting average.

|                 | W-L   | ERA  | G  | GS | GF | SV | IP    | H   | R   | ER  | HR | HB | BB  | SO  | WP | OBA  |
|-----------------|-------|------|----|----|----|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|----|------|
| <b>PITCHERS</b> |       |      |    |    |    |    |       |     |     |     |    |    |     |     |    |      |
| VENTERS         | 2-0   | 0.98 | 23 | 0  | 6  | 1  | 27.2  | 17  | 6   | 3   | 0  | 3  | 16  | 31  | 2  | .179 |
| WAGNER          | 4-0   | 1.42 | 26 | 0  | 25 | 11 | 25.1  | 15  | 4   | 4   | 2  | 1  | 11  | 38  | 2  | .170 |
| KIMBREL         | 1-0   | 1.69 | 6  | 0  | 2  | 0  | 5.1   | 4   | 2   | 1   | 0  | 0  | 8   | 10  | 1  | .190 |
| O'FLAHERTY      | 2-1   | 2.10 | 32 | 0  | 5  | 0  | 25.2  | 20  | 8   | 6   | 1  | 1  | 9   | 22  | 2  | .220 |
| HUDSON          | 6-2   | 2.43 | 13 | 13 | 0  | 0  | 85.1  | 69  | 24  | 23  | 6  | 3  | 30  | 36  | 3  | .224 |
| SAITO           | 1-2   | 2.92 | 25 | 0  | 5  | 0  | 24.2  | 16  | 9   | 8   | 1  | 0  | 8   | 34  | 0  | .176 |
| MEDLEN          | 4-1   | 3.23 | 20 | 7  | 3  | 0  | 61.1  | 60  | 24  | 22  | 8  | 1  | 10  | 44  | 1  | .267 |
| MOYLAN          | 3-1   | 3.51 | 33 | 0  | 1  | 0  | 25.2  | 27  | 10  | 10  | 1  | 1  | 17  | 24  | 1  | .278 |
| HANSON          | 6-3   | 3.69 | 13 | 13 | 0  | 0  | 75.2  | 70  | 32  | 31  | 6  | 7  | 27  | 80  | 2  | .249 |
| MARTINEZ        | 0-0   | 3.86 | 4  | 0  | 2  | 0  | 4.2   | 3   | 2   | 2   | 1  | 0  | 0   | 5   | 1  | .176 |
| KAWAKAMI        | 0-8   | 4.48 | 12 | 12 | 0  | 0  | 68.1  | 72  | 37  | 34  | 8  | 1  | 22  | 44  | 2  | .274 |
| LOWE            | 8-5   | 4.81 | 14 | 14 | 0  | 0  | 82.1  | 83  | 46  | 44  | 6  | 1  | 35  | 48  | 3  | .270 |
| JURRJENS        | 0-3   | 6.38 | 5  | 5  | 0  | 0  | 24    | 22  | 19  | 17  | 3  | 1  | 11  | 15  | 0  | .242 |
| CHAVEZ          | 0-1   | 7.33 | 18 | 0  | 13 | 0  | 23.1  | 25  | 19  | 19  | 5  | 0  | 8   | 22  | 0  | .269 |
| <b>ATLANTA</b>  |       |      |    |    |    |    |       |     |     |     |    |    |     |     |    |      |
| OPPONENTS       | 37-27 | 3.73 | 64 | 64 | 62 | 12 | 562.2 | 513 | 251 | 233 | 50 | 20 | 215 | 455 | 20 | .246 |
|                 | 27-37 | 4.44 | 64 | 64 | 61 | 13 | 564   | 565 | 312 | 278 | 51 | 15 | 295 | 436 | 29 | .262 |





ST. LOUIS CARDINALS



ATLANTA BRAVES

Hrabosky, now in his 26th year as a broadcaster, spent his last three seasons as a pitcher with the Braves after signing as a free agent for the 1980 season.

## “MAD HUNGARIAN”

**FORMER COLORFUL RELIEVER AL HRABOSKY IS A FIXTURE IN CARDINALS' BROADCAST BOOTH**

BY BRIAN KNAPP

**AL HRABOSKY HAS ENDURED** trials and tribulations that might have brought lesser men to their knees. Having undergone five spinal surgeries since 1990, the soon-to-be 61-year-old deals with pain, stiffness and physical limitations on a daily basis.

First injured in a 1976 brawl with the Astros, the former Braves (1980-82), Cardinals and Royals relief pitcher has undergone triple fusion procedures in his neck and back, and the degenerative condition afflicting his spine only promises more trips to the operating room in the future. All told, Hrabosky has been treated for seven different disc herniations.

"The surgeries have helped, but every day I wake up and know I'm not the same," he said. "I'm not unusual, though. Players played, and our bodies paid the price over the years, especially on [artificial] turf. It's part of the price you pay."

Despite the health-related issues, Hrabosky has provided color commentary for St. Louis Cardinals games since 1985 and maintains his current role as a television analyst for Fox Sports Midwest. The outlet televises 132 games per season.

"When I played with the Cardinals, I did a radio show, and I always envisioned wanting to work after my playing career ended, so I pursued an opportunity in broadcasting the first year after I retired," Hrabosky said. "I've never had a job. I'm always reminded of how lucky I am. I had an opportunity, and I made the most of it. This is the last thing I want to do. I still enjoy going to the ballpark."

During his career in the broadcast booth, Hrabosky has been witness to three 100-win seasons, four World Series appearances, and a World Championship in 2006. The Cardinals have reached the post-season seven times in the last 10 years.

"I like it when my team wins. That's the best part of the job," Hrabosky said. "As a broadcaster, you sort of have the same address as the players and the same lifestyle, but your ERA never goes up. As a pitcher, I had to have tunnel vision. As a broadcaster, you have to look at all aspects of the game, of what it means to a 25-man roster."

Road trips have lost some of their luster for Hrabosky.

"As I've gotten older, the travel has probably not been as much fun," he said. "It's nice that I've been around long enough to have friends in other cities, but when I do go home, I enjoy it a lot more."

His connection to the Cardinals - the team that picked him in the first round of the 1969 draft - runs much deeper. Hrabosky holds part ownership in The Ballpark Saloon, a bar and restaurant located 500 feet from home plate at Busch Stadium. Opened in 2004, it rests on four and a half acres in downtown St. Louis.

"I'm not there every day before a game, but for an hour, hour and a half after the game, I'm there," Hrabosky said. "They bring me over in a golf cart. I was always interested in watering holes, but I wanted to be involved with the right people and the right location."





Hrabosky remains heavily involved on the charity front, as well. Having lent his time, money and services to organizations like the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association, and Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, his focus in recent years has shifted to the military. He has taken particular interest in the causes behind Little Patriots Embraces, Hired Heroes, and the Wounded Warrior Project.

"I think we have a great deal of responsibility to those who served in our armed forces," Hrabosky said. "It's just about being a patriot. I have an older brother who's an Annapolis graduate. I have the greatest respect for anybody's who's worn that uniform."

For millions of baseball fans, however, Hrabosky will always be remembered as the "Mad Hungarian," his intense alter ego that riled spectators and intimidated opposing batters with a choreographed routine behind the mound. He reached his pinnacle in 1975 when he led the National League in saves (22) and finished third in the Cy Young Award balloting behind Tom Seaver and Randy Jones.

"I was a competitor," said Hrabosky. "I don't think I had the greatest physical stuff, but I wanted to be out there and felt like I could do the job. That's why I created this persona of the Mad Hungarian (Fu Manchu, long hair, and stomping angrily in back of the mound). At times, because of that persona, I felt like I was holding 50,000 people in the palm of my hand. It got the crowd to react. I remember an umpire told me once, 'I don't particularly like what you do behind the mound, but a lot of people enjoy it, so I accept it.'"

"If I was in St. Louis, people were cheering for me. If I was on the road, I was getting showered with boos. Either way, people noticed," he added. "I really created an aura. I was kind of the first to do it right out in front of people. It helped me create a guy who was [Rolands] Fireman of the Year [in 1975, when he also was third in the Cy Young voting]."

After a two-year stop in Kansas City, Hrabosky signed with the Braves as a free agent in November 1979. He spent parts of three seasons in Atlanta before his release during the 1982 season, compiling a 7-4 mark with seven saves and a 3.51 ERA in 100 appearances. Hrabosky played the 1983 season in the minor leagues before calling it quits.

In 13 major league seasons, the left-handed Hrabosky saved 97 games, posted a 64-35 record with a 3.10 ERA, and gave up fewer hits (619) than innings pitched (722).

## BURDETTE JERSEY BRINGS TOP DOLLAR

**IN 1958**, the Milwaukee Braves fell just short of winning a second straight World Series. Over 50 years later, memorabilia from that team continues to draw considerable interest from collectors.

Collectibles from Hank Aaron, Warren Spahn and Eddie Mathews remain the most popular from that club, by far. But earlier this year, it was a Lou Burdette item that sold for an exceptional price.

A 1958 Burdette road jersey (below) went for \$11,000 at an auction held in King of Prussia, Pa., near Philadelphia, this past February. The gray flannel jersey was in excellent condition and had "Burdette 1958" stitched inside the collar. It had only seen light to moderate wear. Although this piece had a price guideline between \$5,000 and \$7,500 prior to the bidding, it surpassed that range by a wide margin.

"It certainly is an exceptional number," said David Hunt of Hunt Auctions, which hosted the event. "In auction scenarios, obviously here and there, you have things that outperform expectations. But that's one of the more dramatic pricings we've seen over the last five years, relative to what it is."

Burdette won 167 games for the Braves during the team's first 10 seasons in Milwaukee (1953-62). Warren Spahn (205 victories) was the only pitcher to win more in this time frame. While an outstanding pitcher and a Braves Hall of Famer, Burdette is not in Cooperstown. Even though he was MVP of the 1957 World Series for beating the Yankees three times, his collectibles usually sell for reasonable prices.

"Obviously, it's a legendary team. That is the golden era in Milwaukee Braves history," said Hunt, providing some reasons for the high sales price. "It is a very popular player – well-known name in Braves' circles – albeit not a Hall of Famer. Incredible condition, literally flawless, just gorgeous all original, good wear, but not abused."

The same auction featured a pair of Spahn's game-worn road pants, also from the 1958 season, that sold for \$1,400. The pants had "Spahn 1958" chain stitched into a tag in the waist area. This piece showed some wear with soil in a few areas. It also surpassed the price guideline range of between \$750 and \$1,250.

Interest in the 1958 Braves continued into a March internet/phone auction held by Hunt Auctions. A Hires Root Beer card of Aaron from that season sold for \$491. The Hires Root Beer set included only 66 cards, and focused on the top players from the '58 season. The cards show each player's photo through a wood knothole. A youthful-looking Aaron, then just 24 years old, was coming off an MVP season in 1957.

"Baseball cards were crazy popular back then," said Hunt. "So [companies like] Hires Root Beer, Gunther Beer, and Wilson Franks would package cards in their products to get people to buy them. Just like today when you see things in cereal boxes."

Regional cards like this are much less common than those made by national baseball card companies, because they get produced in smaller quantities.





# ALUMNI NOTES

**Leo Mazzone's** (Coach, 1985, '90-2005) second annual Furry Friends Fundraiser was held June 5 at Wills Park in Alpharetta to benefit Companion Animal Connection. Visit [cacadopt.petfinder.com](http://cacadopt.petfinder.com) for info.



Old pals (L-R) Mark Lemke, Javy Lopez and Charlie Leibrandt reunite with Leo Mazzone at his Furry Friends Fundraiser.

The late **Joe Niekro** (RHP, 1973-74) will be inducted into the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame Aug. 21 during a banquet at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling, W.Va. Niekro, who died Oct. 26, 2006 after suffering a brain aneurysm, was a baseball and basketball star at Bridgeport (Ohio) High.

**Dale Murphy** (OF/C/1B, 1976-90) will appear at a luncheon at Regions Park in Birmingham July 31 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (local) and at the Birmingham Barons game that evening.

The sons of **Steve Bedrosian** (RHP, 1981-85, '93-95) and White Sox manager **Ozzie Guillen** (INF, 1998-99) were among players selected in the June draft. Cam Bedrosian, a hard-throwing reliever, was taken in the first round by the Angels. Ozney Guillen, an outfielder, was picked in the 22nd round by the White Sox. Both are coming out of high school.

**Nick Green** (INF, 2004) was designated for assignment by the Dodgers.

**Dewayne Wise** (OF, 2004) was designated for assignment by the Dodgers and then signed a minor league contract with Toronto.

**Phil Niekro** (RHP, 1964-83, '87) was

scheduled to appear June 20 in the second annual Hall of Fame Classic at Doubleday Field in Cooperstown. Classic Weekend features several family friendly activities, including the Hall of Fame Classic, which is preceded by a parade and the Legends Hitting Contest, as well as the Cooperstown Golf Classic fundraiser for the Museum, a Youth Skills Clinic hosted by former major leaguers, and a Voices of the Game program.

Niekro played in the CGI Pro-Am at the Regions Charity Classic May 12, in Hoover, Ala.

**Hank Aaron** (OF/1B, 1954-74) and his wife, Billye, announced the latest addition to their Chasing the Dream Foundation, which assists young people in the pursuit of their dreams. Adding to previous initiatives of assisting 755 children between the ages of 12 and 18 and the recent addition of "44 Forever" which will support 44 young teenage children each year in perpetuity, the latest program entitled "4 for 4" was created. The Foundation will endow four-year scholarships for the benefit of youngsters who have chosen to attend college. With particular emphasis on prior "dream chaser" recipients who have now reached college age, this second perpetual program will provide two scholarships at Morehouse College, and one each at Texas College, Fisk University, and through the Dream Chaser Fund with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in honor of Commissioner Bud Selig. The goal now is to create 12 perpetual scholarships at a number of colleges that will be granted each year. The first recipients of the "4 for 4" scholarships were on hand at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., on June 5, where Aaron's permanent Chasing the Dream exhibition is on display.

Aaron attended the annual Civil Rights Game on May 15 at Cincinnati's Great American Ball Park where he was seated with fellow Hall of Famers Ernie Banks, Frank Robinson and Willie Mays.

## BIRTHDAYS

### JULY

|                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 <sup>ND</sup>  | TIM SPEHR (44)              |
| 3 <sup>RD</sup>  | LARRY WHISENTO (54)         |
|                  | DANNY HEEP (53)             |
|                  | DAN MEYER (29)              |
| 4 <sup>TH</sup>  | CHUCK TANNER (81)           |
|                  | BOBBY MALKMUS (79)          |
|                  | VINNY CASTILLA (43)         |
| 5 <sup>TH</sup>  | GARY MATTHEWS (60)          |
| 6 <sup>TH</sup>  | MARTY MALLOY (38)           |
|                  | GREG NORTON (38)            |
| 7 <sup>TH</sup>  | CHUCK GOGGIN (65)           |
|                  | RICK KESTER (64)            |
|                  | LEN BARKER (55)             |
| 8 <sup>TH</sup>  | AL SPANGLER (77)            |
|                  | JEROME WALTON (45)          |
| 9 <sup>TH</sup>  | SONNY JACKSON (66)          |
|                  | GEORGE STONE (64)           |
| 10 <sup>TH</sup> | HARRY MACPHERSON (84)       |
| 11 <sup>TH</sup> | JOEY MCLAUGHLIN (54)        |
|                  | ANDY ASHBY (43)             |
|                  | BLAINE BOYER (29)           |
| 12 <sup>TH</sup> | MIKE PAGE (70)              |
| 13 <sup>TH</sup> | JACK AKER (70)              |
|                  | ROB BELLOIR (62)            |
| 14 <sup>TH</sup> | PEPE FRIAS (62)             |
|                  | EARL WILLIAMS (62)          |
|                  | JOSE HERNANDEZ (41)         |
|                  | <b>TIM HUDSON (35)</b>      |
| 15 <sup>TH</sup> | JUNG KEUN BONG (30)         |
| 16 <sup>TH</sup> | <b>TERRY PENDLETON (50)</b> |
|                  | JORGE VASQUEZ (32)          |
| 18 <sup>TH</sup> | JOE TORRE (70)              |
| 21 <sup>ST</sup> | DENIS MENKE (70)            |
|                  | AL HRABOSKY (61)            |
| 22 <sup>ND</sup> | BOB PORTER (51)             |
|                  | GARY EAVE (47)              |
| 23 <sup>RD</sup> | VIRGIL JESTER (83)          |
| 24 <sup>TH</sup> | CLINT CONATSER (89)         |
|                  | ETHAN BLACKABY (70)         |
| 25 <sup>TH</sup> | BIFF POCOROBA (57)          |
|                  | <b>BILLY WAGNER (39)</b>    |
|                  | JAVIER VAZQUEZ (34)         |
| 26 <sup>TH</sup> | PETE WARD (71)              |
|                  | GREG COLBRUNN (41)          |
| 27 <sup>TH</sup> | JOHN EDELMAN (75)           |
| 28 <sup>TH</sup> | JERRY MADDOX (57)           |
|                  | WILSON BETEMIT (30)         |
|                  | CHAD PARONTO (35)           |
| 29 <sup>TH</sup> | FELIX MANTILLA (76)         |
|                  | TOMMY GREGG (47)            |
|                  | SETH GREISINGER (35)        |
| 30 <sup>TH</sup> | MICKEY MAHLER (58)          |
| 31 <sup>ST</sup> | TERRY FOX (75)              |
|                  | HANK SMALL (57)             |
|                  | MIKE BIELECKI (51)          |





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Conyers, Ga. 30013-9247  
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WEB Braves.com/choptalk

## PUBLISHER

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Wonderdog Publishing, Inc.

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## PRODUCTION

ART DIRECTOR: Clark Odum

## ADVERTISING

SALES:  
Richard Burg (770) 978-6297  
Doug Campbell (770) 815-7506

## PRINTER

Publisher's Press

## SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

McMillen Communications

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Rob Calcutta

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Send address changes or corrections to:  
ChopTalk, P.O. Box 81247, Conyers, Ga.  
30013-9247 or call 1-877-655-CHOP  
[2467] or visit [braves.com/choptalk](http://braves.com/choptalk).

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PHONE 1-877-655-CHOP [2467]  
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# THE RIGHT SIDE

**WOW!** That turnaround didn't take long, did it? Last month at this time, the Braves were 17-19. Now, after going 20-8 (.714) since we last visited, they are 37-27 overall (.578) and tied for the best record in the league. They're 28-13 since May 1 (.683), the best record in baseball.

Virtually every player on the roster - how about that Jonny Venters, for example - has played a significant role in the change of fortunes, but at the top of the list is the right side of the infield, Martin Prado and Troy Glaus.

Martin - rhymes with hitting *machine* - is the one player who hit the ground running right out of Disney. Glaus took a month to rid himself of the rust from a 2009 season of inactivity and then turned into *Super First Baseman*.

Both Prado and Glaus, by the way, have not just been spanking pitchers unmercifully, but they also have provided a tight net of leather on the right side. Prado's fielding has been just as steady and spectacular as his hitting, and Glaus, in only two months as a first baseman, has become adept at scooping low throws, as well as at stabbing hard-hit grounders.

Of course, it is their hitting that is most noticeable. Prado, besides being a strong candidate to win the batting title, is proving to be the leadoff hitter the Braves have long been looking to find. Similarly, Glaus is the big power bat in the middle of the order that also has been missing.

Let's start with Prado and a little three-way, related conversation that took place recently in the Braves' dugout at Dodger Stadium.

ChopTalk to Prado: Martin, how do you like hitting leadoff?

Prado: It's good, but it's hard. You get five or six at-bats, and they want you to take more pitches and get some walks.

ChopTalk: No! They don't want you to change anything!

ChopTalk to Bobby Cox: Do you want Prado to do anything differently just because he's hitting leadoff?

Cox: No! Just keep swinging away, doing what he's doing.

ChopTalk to Prado: They don't want you to do anything differently. Bobby just said "keep swinging away."

Prado: You asked him?

ChopTalk: Yes, just now.

Prado: That's good... Thank you.

Don't let it be said that CT isn't doing its part to help this hot streak!

Prado, of course, has kept swinging away. No need to worry about walks when you're hitting .368 as a leadoff man - the best in the majors - and have an on-base percentage of .406 in the leadoff spot, second in the majors.

Then there's Glaus, who has 40 RBIs since May 1 to lead the league and was hitting .336 with 11 home runs over the same period, good for fourth and second in the NL, respectively. The speculation about whether or not it was wise to sign Glaus lasted exactly a month! Case closed.

What fans might be surprised to learn is Bobby Cox's thought about Glaus.

"Troy has a real passion for the game," Cox said. "He's a hard-nosed player with a great attitude, and he wants to be out there every day."

The loss of Takashi Saito to a hamstring strain was a big blow to the bullpen, but fortunately, the remarkable Venters was there to help fill the gap in setting up for Billy Wagner. It can be difficult to get to know just what players are like that don't speak much English to the media, but Cox had a good story that tells what Saito is like.

"When we were in the middle of that nine-game losing streak, he came into my office with his interpreter (Kosuke Inaji). The interpreter said, 'He wants you to know he'll pitch every day if you need him.' Saito has been fantastic. I can't say enough good things about him."

Yet another indicator that the best could be yet to come is the fact that the Braves' 6-5 road trip against the Dodgers, Diamondbacks and Twins was their best of 11 games or more since 2001. The Braves were 19-6 at home (.760) and had played the fewest home games of any team in the majors at the start of the June 15 homestand. If that trend continues, they will be tough to catch.

**THIS ISSUE OF CHOPTALK** was mailed June 22. The August issue will be mailed July 23.



# BEYOND BASEBALL

BY PATTY RASMUSSEN



After this picture, can it be only a matter of time before David Ross makes a guest appearance at the Entertainment Tonight anchor desk with Mary Hart?

DISCOVERED!



**WHAT'S A BACKUP CATCHER** doing hobnobbing with the host of the longest-running and most-watched entertainment news program on television? "I met **Mary Hart** at a function when I played out here," said **David Ross** after getting a big pre-game hug from Hart at Dodger Stadium on June 4. "We talked and got to know each other, and she's just a really nice person." Ross came up through the Dodgers' farm system and played in L.A. in 2002-04. Hart, the host of Entertainment Tonight since 1982, is a big Dodgers fan and often can be seen on telecasts sitting right behind home plate. She was wearing her Dodgers "letter sweater" for '70s Night at Dodger Stadium.

BB

**WHILE IN LOS ANGELES**, **Derek Lowe** and his wife, CT columnist **Carolyn Lowe**, had a chance to visit patients at the Mattel Children's Hospital-UCLA who were part of their D-Lowe's Heroes program, which they started when Lowe played for the Dodgers. One member of D-Lowe's Heroes is **Nick Hurtado**, an 18-year-old high school senior who earned a full baseball scholarship to Cal State-Fullerton before learning he had osteosarcoma, a form of bone cancer, in both his right knee and femur. Nick, who was to undergo surgery on June 22, attended the June 4 Braves-Dodgers game, along with several friends, meeting Lowe and other ballplayers after the game...

**Kim Hudson**, wife of **Tim Hudson**, spoke to recipients of the **Vince Dooley** Award, presented by the non-profit Athletes for a Better World, prior to the May 16 Braves game. Kim stressed the importance of education and especially giving back to the community. The Hudsons took their children, daughters **Kennedie** and **Tess** and son **Kade**, on the Braves' three-city, 11-day road trip, June 3-14. While in L.A., Kim and the kids took a bus tour of Hollywood and the stars' homes in

Beverly Hills, attended games at Dodger Stadium, and ate at one of the famed In & Out Burger restaurants. In Arizona, they hiked on Camelback Mountain, and in Minneapolis, they visited Target Field, the new home of the Minnesota Twins, and spent a few hours at the famous Mall of America...

Also making the West Coast trip were **Ronnie Snitker**, wife of third base coach **Brian Snitker**, and **Lynn Cadahia**, wife of bench coach **Chino Cadahia**...

Braves chairman emeritus, **Bill Bartholomay**, and other top brass including current chairman and CEO **Terry McGuirk**, **John Schuerholz** and **Frank Wren** were in Minneapolis on June 11 for the Twins' tribute to **Bobby Cox**. The executives also took a two-and-a-half hour tour of Target Field...

**Amanda** and **Rachel McDowell**, daughters of pitching coach **Roger McDowell**, were on the Braves' charter flight to Los Angeles where

they were met by their grandparents. The girls went to Universal Studios, enjoyed a game at Dodger Stadium, and then headed for a vacation with their grandparents who live in Palm Springs, Calif. McDowell's wife, **Gloria**, had a week in Atlanta with the house to herself before she flew to California



Derek Lowe (center) with Dodgers closer Jonathan Broxton (L) and Nick Hurtado, a lefty pitching prospect now facing a battle against cancer.





During batting practice, Brian McCann greets one of the Rally kids he hosted at Turner Field June 1.

to be with the girls in Palm Springs, returning to Atlanta on June 26...

**Brian McCann** and his wife, **Ashley**, continued a tradition begun a couple of years ago when they hosted four families associated with the Rally Foundation at a Braves game, June 1. The children met McCann and other Braves players during batting practice, then stayed for the game, sitting with Ashley and other Rally Foundation staff. Throughout the game, the Braves promoted the work of the foundation, including the two-month, five-city Rally Fantasy Baseball Tour. The tour brings Rally kids and their families from five children's hospitals in Atlanta, Seattle, Cleveland, Tampa and Los Angeles to meet that team's Mizuno brand ambassador, hold a fundraiser and attend a game...

Two Wrens are leaving the nest. **Frank Wren** and his wife, **Terri**, celebrated the high school graduation of their twin sons, **Kyle** and **Colby**, from Landmark Christian School. Both sons will attend Georgia Tech where they have signed to play baseball.



The Wrens (L-R) Terri, Kyle, Jordan, Colby and Frank at graduation for Kyle and Colby.

Kyle played outfield and pitched in high school, and Colby played third base...

**Gloria McDowell**, **Ronnie Snitker** and daughter **Erin** participated in the annual Save our Skin 5K Walk/Run, held May 29, at Perimeter Place in Atlanta. The event, sponsored by the Skin Cancer Awareness Network (SCAN), raised money and awareness to combat skin cancer, a cause close to Gloria who recently had a personal brush with the disease...

**Nolan Fontana**, the grandson of Braves

Hall of Fame pitcher **Lou Burdette**, continues to impress. The freshman shortstop for the University of Florida Gators batted leadoff in the June 12 game against the University of Miami. In the 10th inning, Fontana reached on an error and scored the game's winning run, propelling the Gators to the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska. Fontana was also named to the Louisville Slugger Freshman All-America Team as the top college freshman shortstop in the country.



## "THANKS, TOMMY"

**TOM GLAVINE** (C) was inducted into the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame on June 12, at the Rialto Center for the Arts in downtown Atlanta. Glavine was introduced by Braves president **John Schuerholz** (L), himself a member of the Hall, and by his former pitching coach, **Leo Mazzone** (R). In his remarks, Schuerholz ticked off highlights from Glavine's career but described his favorite moment as, "October 28, 1995. Braves 1, Cleveland 0. Thanks, Tommy," citing Glavine's decisive win that brought the World Series championship to Atlanta for the first, and only, time. Mazzone highlighted Glavine's work ethic and thanked him

for, "making me look smart for a long time." Glavine began his speech by thanking his family, parents **Fred** and **Millie Glavine**, his wife, **Chris**, and their children, two of whom, **Jonathan** and **Amber**, both 15, were present. Glavine also tipped his cap to **Bobby Cox**, saying, "He had as much influence on my life as my parents did. He taught me as much about life as he did about baseball in ways that I see and use every day." Also in attendance at the ceremony and reception were Atlanta Sports Hall of Famer **Pete Van Wieren** and his wife, **Elaine**, and **Paula Caray**, on behalf of her late husband **Skip Caray**, also a member of the Hall.



WHETHER YOU'RE HAVING FUN AT TURNER FIELD, EXPERIENCING A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH YOUR FAVORITE BRAVES PLAYER, OR JUST SHOWING OFF YOUR COLLECTION OF BRAVES STUFF OR TRYING ON YOUR NEW BRAVES SHIRT, WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT AND SEE A PICTURE.



## OUTFIELD PROSPECT

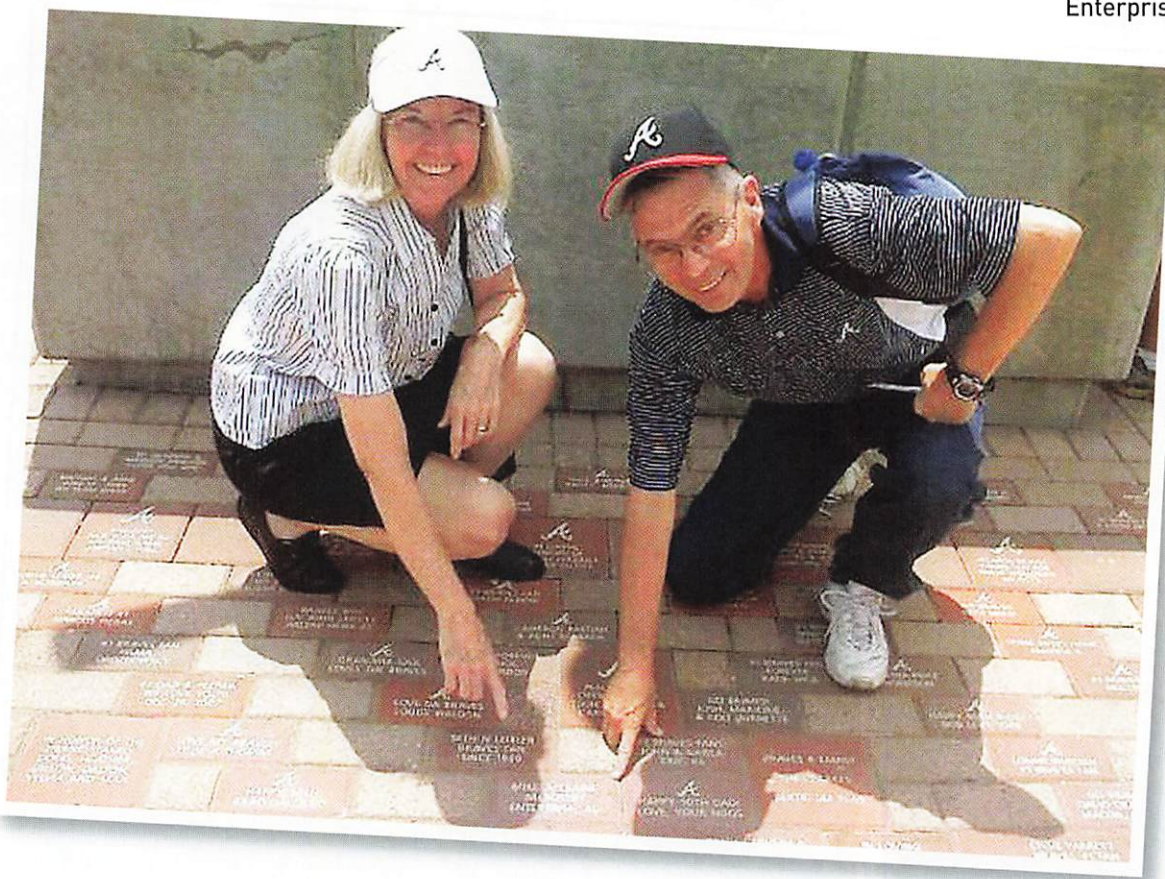
This is a picture of my 2-month-old grandson, Lukas Norbury, practicing catching flyballs in his first Braves shirt. Lukas is a diehard third-generation Braves fan who hopes to see his team play in Philadelphia this summer.

EVERETT NORBURY  
Lebanon, Pa.

## A PIECE OF THE PARK

My husband and I have been Braves fans since 1973 and last year traveled from lower Alabama to visit our daughter and her family who live near Atlanta. They took us to a Braves game where we got to see the personalized engraved paver brick our children got us for Christmas. We've been to numerous Braves games over the years and are so proud to be a permanent part of Turner Field!

MIKE & ELAINE MCINTOSH  
Enterprise, Ala.



CHOPTALK AND THE ATLANTA BRAVES SUPPORT OUR TROOPS



## MASCOT HIDEAWAY

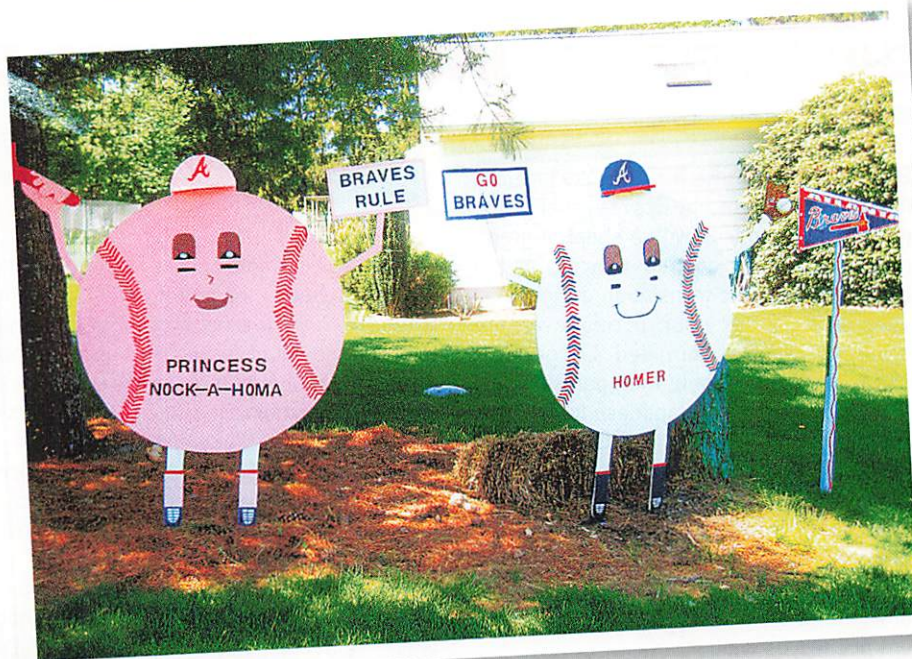
Up here in Central Pennsylvania, it's Philly Country. But in my neighborhood, those fans are on notice it's Bravo Territory. Hopefully, Homer and Princess Nock-a-Homa will ignite the Braves' bats and propel the Braves to the playoffs in 2010!

JONATHAN COHEN  
Harrisburg, Pa.

## LOOKING EXCITED

I'm so excited over the Braves' t-shirt my Grandmoo sent me after I came home from the hospital! I couldn't wait for the season to start... Go Braves!

LILLIAN HODGES  
Henderson, Tenn.



## SHARE YOUR BRAVES FEVER!

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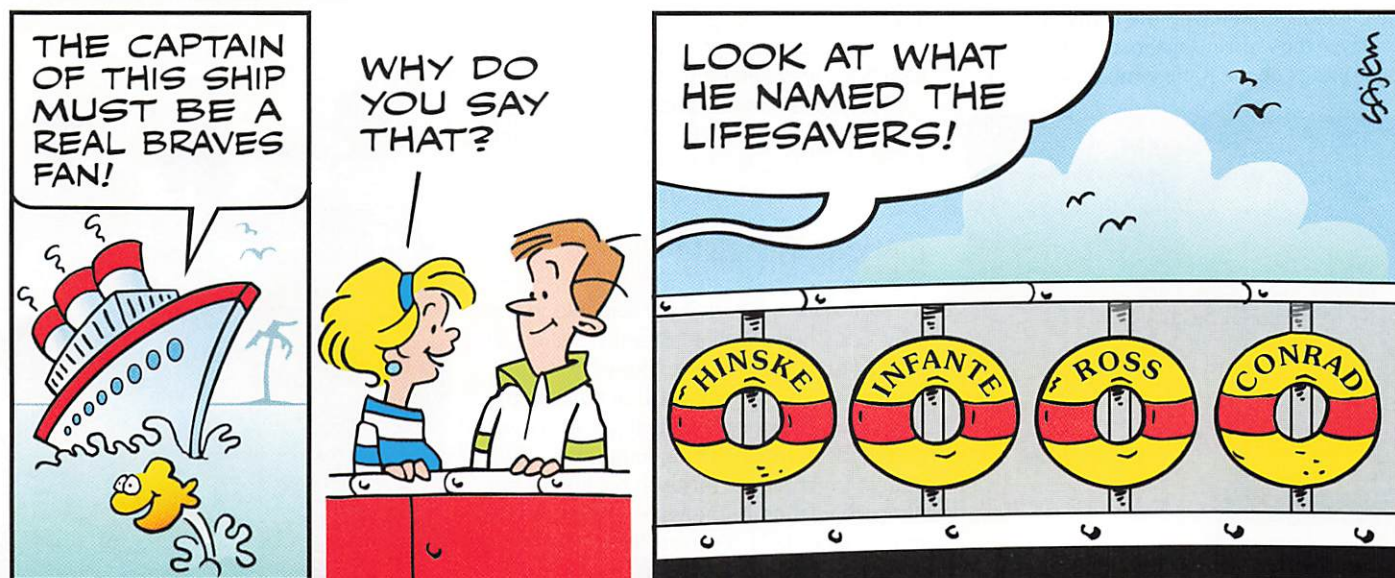
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For the Braves players, Bobby Cox, the coaches, broadcasters, or members of the front office.

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## WHAT A BENCH!





## GAME PREP, JAPANESE STYLE

BY PATTY RASMUSSEN

**BEFORE EACH SERIES**, Kosuke Inaji, 23, the interpreter used by Braves relief pitcher Takashi Saito, sits with a sheaf of graph paper, plain and colored pencils, and a portable electronic translation device. Inaji spends about an hour poring over the scouting reports compiled by pitching coach Roger McDowell, then painstakingly translating them into Japanese for Saito.

"The reports show the strengths and weaknesses of each batter," said Inaji (below). "I'll draw a chart of the batter and the strike zone. I write where their strengths and weaknesses are. I'll square the strengths in red and the weaknesses in blue. There are different symbols for different pitches, as well."

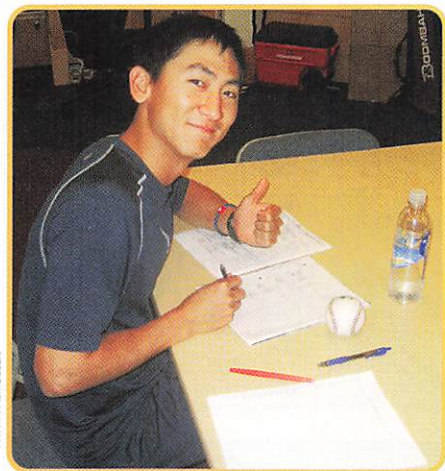
The process of translating the scouting reports takes Inaji about an hour, but when he first started, it took closer to two hours.

"I've gotten better at it," he said.

Saito can read English, but not as comprehensively as he needed to in order to get all the nuances of the scouting reports. And that's where Inaji comes in.

He uses the translator for accuracy in drawing the Kanji symbols, Chinese characters used in writing Japanese. The Japanese alphabet also uses other symbols, hiragana, katakana, some Indo-Arabic numerals and occasionally a Latin alphabet letter. There are hundreds of thousands of characters that make up the Japanese writing alphabet. Since Inaji didn't grow up using Kanji symbols everyday, he checks himself with the translator.

"I type the word in Japanese, and the translator brings up the Kanji symbols," he said.



PATTY RASMUSSEN

Lou Burdette's daughters - (L-R) Mary Lou Wieloszynski, Elaina Fontana and Madge Burdette - salute their father's latest honor outside Miller Park.

Japanese is traditionally written from the top of the page to the bottom, right to left. It is read from the top-right corner of the page to the bottom-right corner, then up to the top for the next column, moving down and back up again. Inaji makes it a little easier on himself, writing left to right, Western style.

"Nowadays most magazines in Japan are written that way, too," he said.

The hardest part of the process is translating things that can't be drawn.

"For example, if the report reads: 'From two strikes, he will look to hit the other way,'" said Inaji. "I can translate it, but it's difficult to translate that word-for-word and give it the same meaning in Japanese."

He simply translates the best he can, but makes sure to talk it over with Saito.

Inaji was born in Japan but came to the U.S. when he was just three years old. He lived in California and graduated from the University of California-Davis with a degree in biotechnology. He thinks he'll go back for a master's degree, but for now, he's thoroughly enjoying his baseball experience.

"I've gotten to travel all over the place," said Inaji.

The biggest challenge in his job is being available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

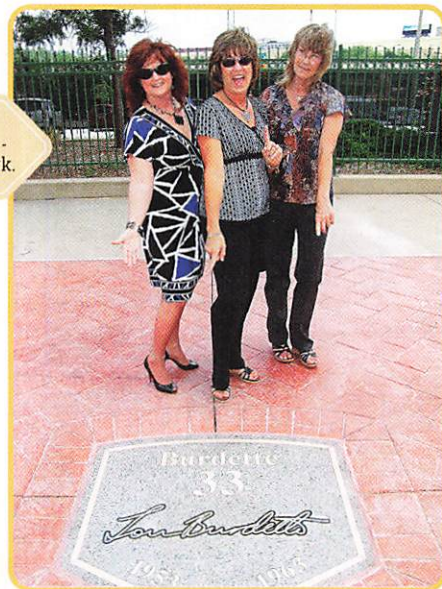
"The job definitely extends outside the work place," he said. "But it's interesting, and it's an honor to work for someone like Takashi."

An avid baseball fan, Inaji definitely knew who Saito was before he took the job.

"I played fantasy baseball," said Inaji. "He was on my team in 2006 and 2007 (when Saito had 63 saves for the Dodgers), so I made sure to tell him, 'Thank you!'"

## WALKING THE WALK

Hank Aaron provided participants in the May 22 Arthritis Walk at Atlantic Station an experience they're not likely to forget. Aaron "walked the walk" (R) to support the fight against arthritis in raising awareness and funds. Aaron has long fought the battle of pain from osteoarthritis in his knees, but his participation in the walk demonstrates the benefits he's received from treatment with Synvisc-One injections.



BOB SCHADEN

## BURDETTE'S NIGHT

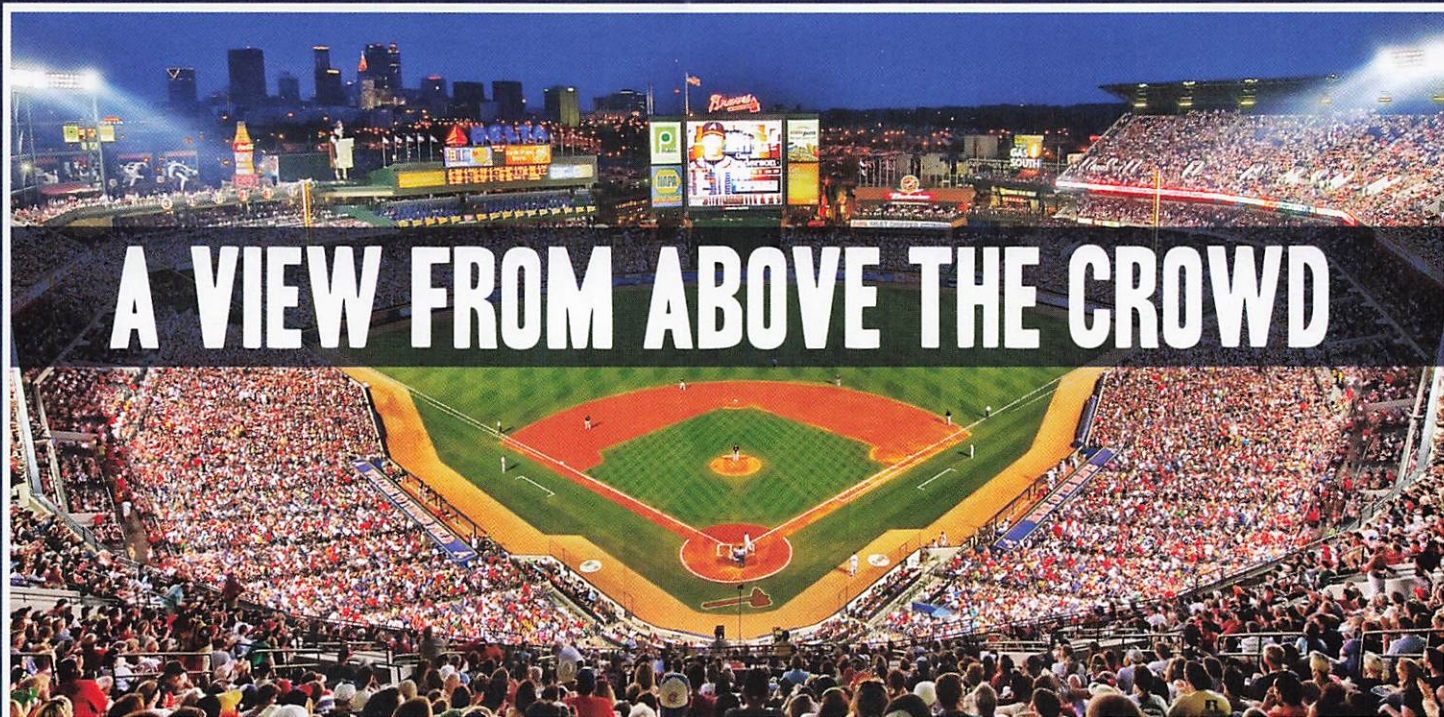
The late Lou Burdette, MVP of the 1957 World Series when he beat the Yankees three times to lead Milwaukee to the World Championship, was inducted into the Walk of Fame at Miller Park June 11. The Walk recognizes the greatest names in both Milwaukee Braves and Brewers history.

Burdette's three daughters - Madge (Burdette) Mary Lou (Wieloszynski) and Elaina (Fontana) - attended, as did his brother, Les. Madge threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the game, and Mary Lou read a speech about her dad. Earlier, a granite marker bearing Burdette's uniform number (33), years with the team (1953-63) and autograph was unveiled outside the ballpark.



BOB SCHADEN





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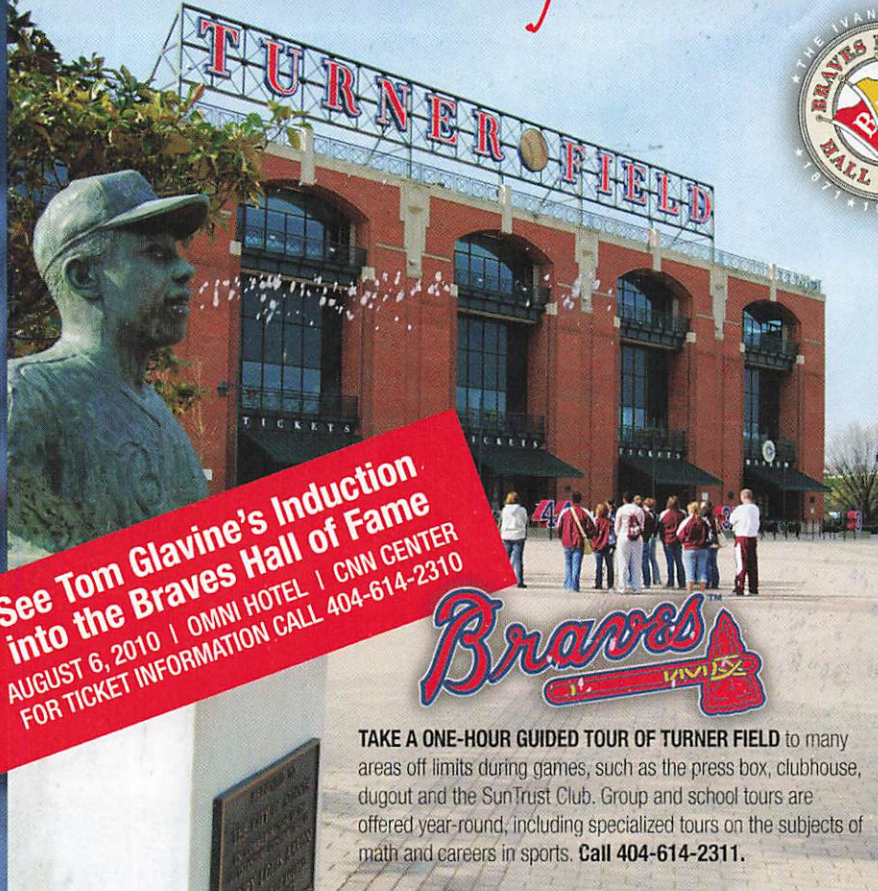
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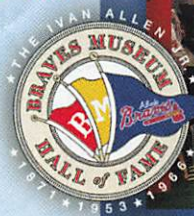
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**VISIT THE BRAVES MUSEUM & HALL OF FAME AT TURNER FIELD** and view more than 600 Braves artifacts and photographs on display. See items from the team's years in Boston (1871-1952), Milwaukee (1953-65), and Atlanta (1966-present), including Hank Aaron's 715th home run bat and ball, the 1995 World Series trophy and much more.

## BOBBY COX \$6 DAYS

In honor of Bobby Cox's last season as Braves manager, tours of Turner Field will be \$6 on the following days in 2010.

|      |              |                                                                               |
|------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2010 | April 10     | Bobby earned his first managerial win in 1978                                 |
|      | May 21       | Bobby's birthday                                                              |
|      | June 16      | Bobby became the winningest manager in Braves history with 1,005 wins in 1998 |
|      | July 11      | Bobby managed the 2000 All-Star Game at Turner Field                          |
|      | August 28    | Bobby earned his 1,500th career win in 1999                                   |
|      | September 29 | Bobby earned his 2,000th career win in 2004                                   |

**For tour or museum information call 404-614-2311 or order tickets at [braves.com/tours](http://braves.com/tours)**

T-Shirts | Caps | Jerseys | Jackets | Ladies Apparel | Youth Apparel | Novelties | Collectibles | Game-Used Merchandise | 404-523-5854

## MARKDOWN MONDAYS

Save 10% on your entire purchase at the Braves Clubhouse Store at CNN Center on any Monday from March 15, 2010 through October 25, 2010.

## \$500 SHOPPING SPREE\*

**ONLY AT THE BRAVES CLUBHOUSE STORE/CNN CENTER**

Starting in May 2010, visit the Braves Clubhouse Store at CNN Center and register for a chance to win a \$500 Shopping Spree of regularly-priced merchandise. One (1) winner will be selected each month during May, June, July, and August 2010.

\* No purchase necessary. Open to legal U.S. residents 18 or older at the time of entry. Void where prohibited. Subject to official rules. Please visit the Braves Clubhouse Store at CNN Center for complete contest rules.

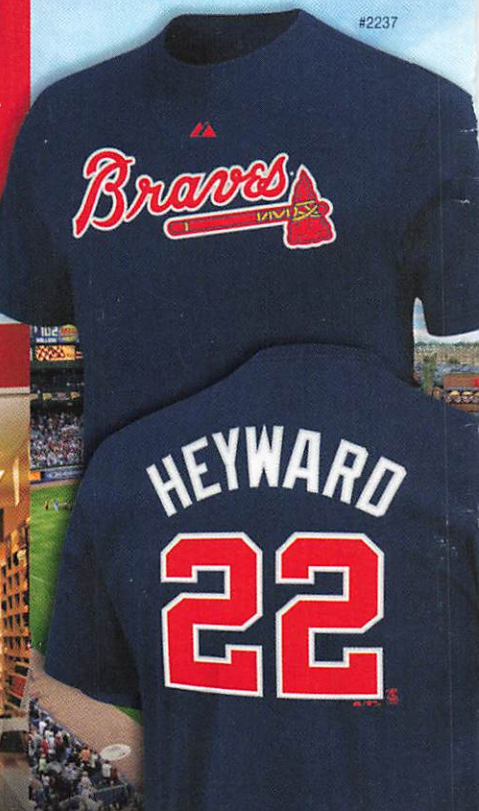


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